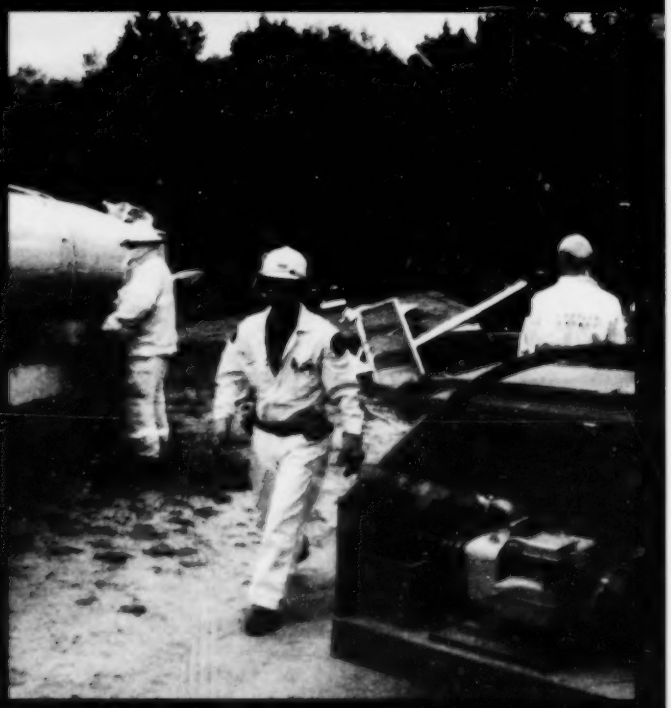
SASKATCHEWAN'S FIRE/RESCUE SERVICE SECTOR:

Identification of Human Resource Development Requirements into the 21st Century



Findings & Recommendations

A Job Start-Future Skills Study

SASKATCHEWAN'S FIRE/RESCUE SERVICE SECTOR:

Identification of Human Resource Development Requirements into the 21st Century

A research project funded by Job Start-Future Skills

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for

Saskatchewan Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training

in partnership with

Office of the Fire Commissioner, Saskatchewan Municipal Affairs, Culture and Housing, and

Members of Saskatchewan's Fire/Rescue Sector

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Informative Abstract

This study of Saskatchewan's Fire/Rescue Sector was carried out in an attempt to identify the sector's current and future human resource development needs, and to provide a framework to guide the future development of the sector. The study was funded by Job Start-Future Skills, a federal-provincial program concerned with the development of sectors of the province's economy and their human resources.

The study's methodology consisted of a review of the historical development of the sector and the function of regulatory agencies related to fire/rescue education, training, certification and accreditation. Information and statistics were gathered from representatives of regulatory agencies and federal and provincial government departments concerned. Visits were made to industrial sites in Saskatchewan to interview supervisors involved in fire/rescue training and supervision.

The study team held informational meetings with Saskatchewan's Office of the Fire Commissioner, an advisory committee to the Minister responsible for the Office of Fire Commissioner, and established a Steering Committee to guide the study. Under the direction of the Steering Committee, three sub-sector working groups were formed for the purpose of identifying the education and training needs of each group and the sector. These groups included representatives of municipal firefighters, industrial firefighters, and Saskatchewan's First Nations and Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management firefighters.

A review was undertaken of the mandates of associations concerned with the professional development of fire fighters and their collective bargaining needs within the province's fire/rescue sector, and interviews were held with leaders of associations representing the sector's groups of firefighters. Through site visits, Internet searches, or meetings with individual representatives, data were collected from a variety of in-province, out-of-province and United States-based providers of educational and training programs to the fire/rescue sector.

The following strategies are offered for moving this report's findings and recommendations forward, and to guide the development and implementation of the sector's expressed aim of creating a Saskatchewan education and training agency to meet its members' needs:

1. The study's steering committee be mandated the task of establishing a Fire/Rescue Sector Council to lead the future development of this sector. The Council's executive membership must be representative and reflective of the sector and its stakeholders. It is further recommended that the Committee identify funding sources to assist in its establishment, initial membership drive, and in the creation of an advisory body to the proposed Saskatchewan-based training agency.

2. A Saskatchewan-based education and training partnership agency be established to serve the needs of the province's fire/rescue sector. It is further recommended that the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology be designated as the agency's coordinating body for the purposes of identifying potential in- and out-of-province delivery and regulatory partners, and for convening initial meetings to establish partnership agreements. In addition, SIAST should be mandated to coordinate the long-term delivery of programs and services, maintain records of training activities across the sector, and work with accrediting and certifying agencies to ensure that programs meet sector requirements.

3. Under the auspices of the Fire/Rescue Sector Council, an industry advisory body be established to guide the development of the partnership agency and the framework of programs and services for the fire/rescue sector.

4. As the fire/rescue sector provides a range of services including fire suppression, vehicle extrication, hazardous materials handling, and more, SIAST be provided with an initial operating grant of $250,000.00 to provide a period of stability and an opportunity for SIAST to establish a sustainable agency in Saskatchewan. This operating grant be provided to SIAST from the levy on taxes collected under the various provincial Acts identified in this study as being tied to the public safety services provided by the fire/rescue sector. As the agency should be at or near self-sufficiency at the end of 5 years, any continuance of this funding beyond that period would be open to negotiation between the province and the agency's board of directors.

5. The study steering committee convene a meeting of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Saskatchewan Intergovernmental Affairs, the

provincial Office of Fire Commissioner, and other agencies concerned to discuss the establishment of an FSIN central office for the purpose of providing leadership in the development of fire services and programs in First Nations communities. It is further recommended that the office structure be based on the provincial Office of the Fire Commissioner and have at a Director of Fire Services and least one Fire Prevention Officer (FPO) in each tribal council, including the independent councils. It is further recommended that INAC provide the FSIN with an annual operating grant to establish and maintain the central office, and that new additional INAC funding be provided for FPOs and tribal council activities related to the provision of First Nations fire services. The amount of this annual grant is to be negotiated between INAC and the FSIN.

6. Using NFPA standards as a basis for development, a working group be established to develop a professional development program for line officers in Saskatchewan's municipal fire departments. This program will lead to a professional designation to be determined by the working group.

7. A working group be established to develop a professional development program for supervisors in Saskatchewan's fire/rescue industrial departments. This program will lead to a professional designation to be determined by the working group.

8. A working group of industrial firefighters and representatives of regulatory agencies be established to negotiate, promote and formalize the acceptance and implementation of the proposed framework of training modules leading to certification of industrial firefighters in Saskatchewan.

9. One of the initial priorities to be assigned to the training agency will be to review the state of the province's volunteer fire services, especially the provision of community and regional access to education and training and the training framework required for certification of volunteer firefighters in Saskatchewan.

10. Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management be invited to work with the OFC and the new training agency to develop curriculum for dealing with urban/wildlands interface, and to develop a framework for establishing and implementing interface agreements throughout Saskatchewan.

11. When the federal transfer of airports to local operators in Saskatchewan has been completed and industry jurisdictional issues around airport fire services have been finalized, airport firefighters should be included in the future development framework of Saskatchewan's fire/rescue sector.

12. As a priority, it is recommended that the to-be-formed sector council meet with the OFC to discuss the just-completed review of the OFC with the aim of linking the recommendations to a strategic framework relative to human resource development issues within the sector.

Acknowledgements

The researchers are indebted to the following individuals and organizations:

- Mr. Rick McCullough, Fire Commissioner, Province of Saskatchewan, and the administrative support and field members of the Office of Fire Commissioner who answered and returned many calls for information during the course of this study.
- Members of the Saskatchewan Fire Service Joint Council which serves as an advisory committee to the Minister responsible for the Office of Fire Commissioner: Chief Hugh Gordon, Saskatchewan Association of Fire Chiefs; Chief Richard Thiele, Saskatchewan Volunteer Firefighters Association; President Gerry Huget, Saskatchewan Professional Firefighters Association; and, Chief Bentley Gibson, Saskatchewan Association of Fire Chiefs.
- Members of the study's steering committee (Appendix A).
- Members of the three sub-sector working groups (Appendix B).
- The many fire chiefs and departmental officers, faculty and administrative members of fire colleges and universities, Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management, Saskatchewan Finance, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Human Resources Development Canada, and industrial managers and supervisors who arranged site visits and/or provided information for the study. From among these participants, we especially acknowledge the ongoing assistance of Chief Hugh Gordon and Training Director Allan Priddell of the Regina Fire Department.
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- Last, but not, least, we extend our appreciation to Ms. Glady's Hill and other Job Start-Future Skills members of Saskatchewan Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training for the funding and opportunity to conduct this study. Gladys attended our meetings, monitored progress, and gave us the time necessary to complete a study of this complex and important sector.

Index of Acronyms

AFTS	Alberta Fire Training School
CAFC	Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs
CAFI	Canadian Association of Fire Investigators
FPO	Fire Prevention Officer
FSTS	Fire Services Training School
IFSAC	the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress
IFSTA	International Fire Service Training Association
LA	Local Assistant
MESC	Manitoba Emergency Services College or
MFC	Manitoba Fire College
NFPA	National Fire Protection Association
NPQS	National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications
OFC	Office of the Fire Commissioner
OSU	Oklahoma State University
SAFC	Saskatchewan Association of Fire Chiefs
SERM	Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management
SPFFA	Saskatchewan Professional Firefighters Association
SVFFA	Saskatchewan Volunteer Firefighters Association
AFTS	Alberta Fire Training School

Fire/Rescue Service Sector Study

Given current initiatives to identify and plan for human resource development requirements within sectors of the provincial economy, this study examined Saskatchewan's fire/rescue service sector with the view of identifying the human resource development requirements for this sector, and to seek recommendations on the future delivery of education and training programs for and within the sector. A research proposal was submitted by the University of Regina's University Extension and the Faculty of Education's Vocational/Technical Education and Human Resource Development programs to Job Start/Future Skills, a federal-provincial cost-shared program that supports research into emerging labour market trends. The proposal was accepted.

The key aims of the study were to:

- identify the immediate, short-term and long-term human resource development needs within the sector
- identify the education and training needs within each sub-sector
- gain input and recommendations on what strategy should be employed for the future development and delivery of education and training for the full sector
- identify three projects that would help the sector organize itself or move forward with an education and training agenda. Note: The study team was provided funding to assist with or to facilitate the development of these initiatives.

To accomplish these aims, the study team set out to establish a project steering committee whose membership would reflect the sectors stakeholder profile. The team also wanted to approach Saskatchewan's Fire/Rescue Service Sector in a fashion that enabled them to access and gather data from key agencies within the sector.

The study sought to identify strategies and develop an education and training delivery framework that would serve to meet both the needs of the fire/rescue sector and the goals of the Saskatchewan Training Strategy; developing a skilled workforce relevant to sectors of the province's labour market, enhance access and support opportunities for learners, and create a coherent, effective and sustainable delivery system. The study also sought to determine ways to achieve some of the Strategy's objectives such as the following:

- increase access and make skills training more timely and relevant to industry and community employment needs
- promote equity, fairness, and diversity throughout the training and employment system
- develop an integrated regional delivery system for training and labour market services
- expand partnerships with First Nations and Métis institutions and services to better identify and meet Aboriginal training and employment needs
- maximizing recognition and transfer of learning to increase mobility and access for learners
- strengthen SIAST's provincial role in support of the Saskatchewan Training Strategy

The Fire/Rescue Service Sector

The Fire/Rescue Service Sector may be seen as a network of agencies involved in the provision of public safety, fire protection and rescue services in the Province of Saskatchewan. The relationship among these agencies is rooted in such areas as linkages to the Office of the Fire Commissioner, the compatibility of mandates, the similarity of occupations and occupational requirements, and the range of tasks and responsibilities associated with the sector. The sector is comprised of agencies and communities of practice within which there are similar interests and requirements in education and training programs and services, either as pre-requisites for entry to work in the sector, or as a condition of continuing employment and participation in the sector. The sector also provides protection and suppression services in many Saskatchewan workplaces in the form of fire/rescue crews. In addition to meeting its regulatory and industry mandates, the sector provides a range of public education and training programs.

Study Methodology and Protocol

To ensure that the senior regulatory body for fire services in Saskatchewan was informed about this study, a meeting was held with the provincial Fire Commissioner to outline the project and to establish a link with the Office of Fire Commissioner (OFC). In addition to this meeting, the Commissioner arranged for the study team to meet with an advisory committee to the OFC. The committee was comprised of key

stakeholders in the fire/rescue sector such as the fire chiefs and line officers, firefighters unions, Saskatchewan Municipal Government, and others. The committee members were provided an overview of the study and individual members were asked to suggest a protocol for getting a representative from each advisory body to sit on a study steering committee.

The next study team activity consisted of field visits to a number of industrial sites throughout the province to gain a sense of the makeup of fire/rescue services in heavy industry. The sites included mines, pulp and paper mills, oil processing plants, and Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management's operation in Prince Albert. Interviews were held with supervisors responsible for each site's fire/rescue services and tours of some sites were taken as an orientation to industrial fire/rescue operations, equipment, and services. These visits provided opportunity to make observations and record field notes from interviews and informal discussions with fire/rescue supervisors and other firefighters who sat in on some discussions.

Through contacts made with members of the OFC's advisory committee and industrial supervisors, and through telephone calls and letters to various other key stakeholders, a steering committee was formed to represent the sector's communities of practice (Appendix A). Members represented fire services in heavy industry, suppliers of fire protection equipment, First Nations, Métis, education and training institutions, safety agencies, professional firefighters, volunteer firefighters, fire chiefs, unions, and the OFC. Representatives of Saskatchewan Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training and the OFC were ex-officio to all meetings.

At the first meeting of the steering committee it was agreed that the most effective way to approach the sector was to delineate it into three key sub-sectors: 1. Professional, composite, and volunteer fire services; 2. industrial fire services; and, 3. Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management and First Nations fire services. It was suggested that a series of working group sessions be organized with representatives being invited from stakeholders within each sub-sector. The working groups were formed through input from members of the steering committee who offered advice on the participant profile that might best reflect a sub-sector's communities of practice (Appendix B). Members of the steering committee had open invitations to attend all sessions. Each of the groups met on two occasions; the first was a full-day session, and the second was a half-day session. All sessions were held at the University of Regina's Extension offices.

The working group sessions were held to identify the education and training needs of each sub-sector, and to gain input and recommendations on what strategy should be employed for the future development and delivery of education and training for the full sector. Each group format was one of an orientation to the study followed by a large-group discussion of issues. After this discussion small groups were formed by areas of interest and assigned a series of questions to guide their discussion. At the end of the small-group sessions the members met back in the large group format to report back on issues and recommendations.

In the first session the groups set out to create a profile of the pre-requisites for entry to their fire services, develop a list of education and training requirements for the sub-sector, and identify an activity that would help their particular sector group move forward with a training agenda. In the second session, the groups focussed in on the future of the fire/rescue sector and what type of framework should guide the future development of its human resources in Saskatchewan. It is noteworthy that the participants' organizations covered all travel expenses as industry's contribution to the project.

In addition to working groups, interviews were conducted with individuals who held leadership or regulatory roles within the fire/rescue sector. Interviewees included the following: industry supervisors, trainers, members of the OFC and other government regulatory bodies, sales agents who provided product-based training to the sector, First Nations leaders and trainers, leaders of associations representing both collective bargaining and professional interests of firefighters, and a number of in-province private sector provider agencies and two out-of-province institutions that deliver fire/rescue training.

Documentation was collected from a number of sources including regulatory agencies, public and private fire colleges, universities, Human Resources Development Canada, Multiculturalism and Citizenship Canada, fire-related research reports, and corporate and interest group studies related to the education and training for Saskatchewan's fire/rescue sector. This aspect of the research also included Internet searches on colleges and universities offering fire-related programs.

The research was carried out over the period of April 1, 1998 to March 31, 1999. Following are the results of the research activities. Part I, entitled "Historical Overview and Background Information", provides an historical overview of the fire/rescue sector and the agencies and communities of practice that currently comprise the sector. Also included is a sample listing of education and training activities offered by provider agencies within the sector. This report presents the outcomes of the steering committee's work, the working group sessions, interviews and documentation review. The format for the report follows a sub-sector or working-group format, and includes recommendations relative to each sub-sector. The term firefighter is used generically to represent all classes and ranks of firefighters. The report concludes with a presentation of overall findings and recommendations.

The Current State of the Sector

Working Groups

Following are the results of each working group and recommendations relative to their sub-sector and the fire/rescue sector as a whole. Also included in each section are the appropriate interview outcomes and documentation review results relevant to each working group. The term firefighter is used throughout to include all members of municipal, industrial, First Nations and SERM fire services, including firefighters, officers, and supervisors.

Outcomes of Career, Composite and Volunteer Fire/Rescue Services Working Group

The Career, Composite and Volunteer Fire Services working group had representatives from the Saskatchewan Association of Fire Chiefs, the Saskatchewan Volunteer Firefighters Association, and The Saskatchewan Firefighters Association (Appendix B). In its first session the group set out to create a profile of the pre-requisites for entry to the fire service, develop a list of education and training requirements for the sub-sector, and identify an activity that would help the group move forward with a training agenda. In its second session, the group focussed in on the future of the fire/rescue sector and what type of framework should guide the future development of its human resources in Saskatchewan. Following is an overview of the current state of the sub-sector as it relates to the three groups of municipal firefighters; career, composite and volunteer.

Investment in Fire Protection Equipment and Training

The investment in fire department capital purchase and maintenance, and the education and training of firefighters was difficult to determine; therefore, it was not possible to get an estimate of sub-sector expenditures.

Apart from actual dollars budgeted for hardware and training within departments (e.g. purchase and maintenance of equipment, clothing, salaries of training personnel, training equipment, travel, tuition), many indirect cost factors enter into the equation (e.g. costs associated with the time members spend in training, time for curriculum development, replacement costs of those who are away on training, wear and tear on equipment, training facility operation repairs and maintenance). It is recognized, however, that the overall investment is considerable and runs into millions of dollars annually.

To gain a sense of the overall sub-sector investment in fire services, following are examples of current municipal budgets for career, composite and volunteer fire departments provided by either the municipal council or the fire department concerned. The profile includes all eight career and composite fire departments, and a sample of volunteer departments that range from having paid full-time chiefs and volunteer firefighters to being full-volunteer departments.

City of Moose Jaw - Career:

- budget for fire services is $3,002,744.00
- budget for training is $27,079.00 to cover direct education and training costs for the department. This figure does not include the salary of the Fire Training Officer, or the wages of the firefighters and floor officer while involved in training.

City of Prince Albert - Career:

- budget for fire services is $3,125,000.00
- budget for training is $36,800.00 to cover direct education and training costs for the department (e.g. training supplies, institutional training fees, conference fees, etc). This figure does not include the salary of the Fire Training Officer, or the wages of the firefighters and floor officer while involved in training.

City of Regina - Career:

- budget for fire services is $18,750,000.00
- budget for training is $390,000.00 to cover costs of trainers and operational direct costs of the training division. The figure does not include wages of the firefighters and floor officers while involved in training.

City of Saskatoon - Career:

- budget for fire services is $ 19,025,500.00
- budget for training is $387,000.00 including the salaries of training officers and the day-to-day direct operational costs of the training division. The figure does not include wages of the firefighters and floor officers while involved in training.

City of North Battleford – Composite:

- budget for fire services is $899,700.00
- budget for training is $18,000.00 with $2,000.00 of that amount set aside for consumables. The department also allocates $15,000.000 to cover the wages of part/time or auxiliary firefighters, and $13,000.00 for wages of full-time firefighters involved in the department's weekly drills. The figure does not cover the cost of time departmental officers and firefighters are involved in day-to-day training.

City of Swift Current – Composite:

- budget for fire services is $1,209,706.00
- budget for training is $35,000 to cover the cost of time departmental officers and firefighters are involved in training, as well as wage and travel expenses associated with out-of-city travel.

City of Weyburn – Composite:

- budget for fire services is $344,347.00
- budget for training is $22,796.00 to cover the to cover the cost of time departmental officers and firefighters are involved in training, as well as wage and travel expenses associated with out-of-city travel. Salaries of officers who also serve as instructors and the time associated with firefighters in training is not included in this amount.

City of Yorkton - Composite:

- budget for fire services is $1,218,000.00
- budget for training is $ 10,000.00 to cover costs associated with public education programs, in-house training, and travel to off-site training. The figure does not include wages of training officers or the salary costs of firefighters and floor officers while involved in training.
- Budget for capital is $90,000.00

The total overall investment in fire services in Saskatchewan's full-time paid fire departments is $47,574,997.00, with a total of $954,675.00 being set aside for the direct costs of education and training.

From the volunteer perspective, the budgets are based on several factors such as whether the chief and/or deputy chief are full-time employees or volunteers, the type of fire department (e.g. single municipal or mutual aid area), and the mix of firefighters who may or may not receive a stipend for their activities. The overall budget usually covers operational aspects of departments and, in some instances, the wages of firefighters involved in training. The training budgets typically cover the costs of training supplies, conference fees, tuition fees, and the cost of external contracted training. Following are some examples of volunteer department budgets.

Waskesiu/Prince Albert National Park - Volunteer:

- budget for fire services is $48,000.00
- budget for training is $ 19,000.00 with $12,500.00 of that amount earmarked to send firefighters to out-of-province fire colleges for training.
- other budget items from the $48,000.000 include volunteer wages @ $11.88 per hour ($6,200.00), insurance ($2,000.00), communications ($2,000.00), utilities ($1,000.00), and equipment ($9,8000.00)
- The Fire Chief and members are volunteer except that they are paid an hourly rate of $11.88 for department related activities.

Waskesiu is a federal community in a federal park; however, there is a move underway to establish a system of local or user-based taxation with a community advisory council to the park superintendent. It is expected that the fire department's future operating budget will be determined by a new formula once the community council is in place. A 3-year plan is currently in place to revitalize the current fire department under the new OH&S regulations governing firefighters.

White City – Volunteer:

- budget for fire services is $35,250.00
- Communications project $10,150.00
- New fire hall construction $250,000.00
- budget for training is $5,400.00 of the $35,250.00 overall operational budget
- The Fire Chief is a volunteer and there are 24 firefighters in the department

Davidson – Volunteer

- budget for fire services is $22,000.00
- monies for training are included in the operational budget and the department draws down funds are needed
- the Fire Chief is a volunteer and there are 16 firefighters at the department

Hudson's Bay – Volunteer:

- budget for fire services is $48,500.00
- budget for training is $15,000.00
- the Fire Chief is a town public works employee and the department has 20 volunteer firefighters

The Rural Municipality of Hudson's Bay is provided with fire protection services and contributes approximately $17,000 to the fire department's budget.

Fort Qu'Appelle – Volunteer

- This fire department serves the local Rural Municipality, neighbouring hamlets, and a 1st Nations community with fire protection services.

Each of the communities involved provide an annual fee to the Fort Qu'Appelle municipal council, and the fire department charges a fee to the municipal authority responsible for responding to out-of-town calls.

- budget for fire services is $10,000.00
- budget for training is $5,000.00 with an option to also draw funds from the $10,000 operational budget
- the Fire Chief is a volunteer and the department has 20 volunteer firefighters

Note: The municipal council purchased a new fire truck/pumper in 1997/98 at a cost of $150,000.00

Gull Lake – Volunteer:

This fire department serves the three rural municipalities of Carmichael, Gull Lake, and Webb and the Town of Gull Lake.

- budget for fire services is $32,520.00. The Town of Gull Lake contributes 45% and the 3 RMs contribute 55% among them to the annual budget
- budget for training is $4,500.00 (e.g. conference and fire school fees, travel, contract training, etc.)
- the Fire Chief is a local business owner who volunteers his time, and there are 14 firefighters in the department.

In volunteer fire departments the number of fires and other calls for services can change the budget as nobody can predict the demand. Fire departments can also recover a portion of their expenditures. For example, during 1997/98 the Gull Lake fire department spent $32,517.95.00 in providing services and collected $10,682.53 through cost-recovery programs associated with fire services (e.g. fee charged to people who have fires of any type). Municipal fire departments also recover some costs associated with motor vehicle accidents through regional Emergency Measures Organizations (EMO). The Gull Lake EMO is a partnership among the village of Tompkins, the Village of Carmichael, the Village of Webb, and Town of Gull Lake and the three local RMs. Over the period of Nov –Oct, 1997/98, the regional EMO spent $10,906.67 on the provision of services covering dangerous goods calls and Motor Vehicle accidents. The EMO recovered $4,950.00 from SGI and other sources associated with dangerous goods calls. The department charges $500.00 per hour for services. The EMO expenditure on training during this period was $1,426.70.

Given that there are some 512 fire departments in Saskatchewan, one can see that the level of overall investment in fire services is very significant. All municipal fire departments noted that capital purchases vary year to year in departments, and a budget of $90,000.00 could run to $300,000.00 + if an unexpected need arose, such as a fire truck being lost to a department. What is crucial in rural fire departments, however, is the level of support provided by the local municipal councils.

Entry-Level Prerequisites

Current entry requirements vary from department to department in career and composite groups, and volunteer departments will basically take anyone who comes along. The traditional recruitment practice in paid departments was to hire off the street and train the recruits after they were hired. Today, however, there is a trend toward hiring graduates of pre-employment programs from fire colleges in Saskatchewan's neighbouring provinces, Alberta and Manitoba. With the first class graduating from the Emergency Services Training Institute in Martensville, Saskatchewan, on May 28, 1999, firefighters from a third facility will be available. Overall, any single or combination of the following pre-requisites may be required for entry-level positions in a fire department:

- NFPA 1001, level I and II, which is currently available from institutions such as the Brandon Emergency Services College or the Vermilion Fire College. This training is also available from a new private training institution in Saskatchewan; the Emergency Services Training Institute located in Martensville.
- Grade 12
- Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation
- First Aid (Standard)
- First Responder (Medical)
- Emergency Medical Technician
- Swimming certification

Practical application of NFPA standards for firefighters is used in recruiting for some departments. Each department sets physical fitness standards and some testing is done for hearing, vision, and color blindness.

Participants recommended that, while departments have traditionally hired and trained to their own entry levels, future recruitment practices for career and composite departments should focus only on candidates who have completed a pre-employment training program and are trained and certified to NFPA 1001 standards. It was also suggested that, to

build fire department standards to adequate levels for meeting future demands, all firefighters should be certified to a minimum of Level I Firefighter; however, if this requirement were implemented, a grandfathering approach must be used to award certification to existing career and composite firefighters.

Volunteer fire departments have three distinct, but not separate issues that affect recruitment: A lack of access to timely training, declining numbers of new entrants, and increasing numbers of people leaving. The result is a significant number of understaffed and inactive fire departments in Saskatchewan

One recruitment issue that is a concern to the fire service is the under-representation of equity groups, particularly in career fire services. Chiefs are aware of this issue and it is a current topic of discussion with them.

Providers, Courses and Delivery of Education and Training

Following is an overview of existing programs and services offered in Saskatchewan's fire departments. The range and depth of courses varies by department as not all departments are equally equipped or have the available training expertise and resources.

Providers. Aspiring firefighters in Saskatchewan currently avail of training offered at two locations. The Manitoba Emergency Services College in Brandon, Manitoba, offers 27 weeks of training leading to Firefighter Level II certification. This training currently costs $5,000.000. Another option is to go to the Alberta Fire Training School in Vermilion, Alberta, 11 weeks of training with Firefighter Level II certification. The current tuition for this training is $6,1965.00. Meals and lodging are additional costs. As previously noted, not all departments require recruits to take this training as a pre-requisite for entry; however, the current trend is that pre-employment training is the future ticket for becoming a firefighter. Fire departments use these institutions for professional development of current firefighters and they either send members out for training or bring the colleges' services to Saskatchewan. Fire departments also use the professional development services of the Justice Institute of British Columbia and Lambton College in Sarnia, Ontario and also avail of programs and services at United States institutions (i.e. Oklahoma State University). Following is a listing of primary in-house and external education and training sources currently used in Saskatchewan.

In-house sources:

- Departmental Training Divisions
- Company Officers or Floor Trainers
- Secondments (e.g. police departments or emergency services providers)
- Human Resources (some departments access in-house services for soft skills development

External sources:

- Recognized post-secondary institutions
- Other fire departments
- Industry (e.g. St. John Ambulance, Red Cross, Health District, Trans Canada Pipelines, SASKFERCO)
- Federal/Provincial Government agencies (e.g. Emergency Measures Office, Office of the Fire Commissioner)
- Industry equipment suppliers
- Consultants and private trainers

In-house courses are delivered through a variety of sources including career fire department trainers, and certified external instructors and consultants. The current number of certified instructors in Saskatchewan stands at 23 holding Level I and 80 holding Level II certification. Most courses are delivered using NFPA Standards as benchmarks for competency.

Firefighters share a strong opinion around the practice that personnel from the Office of the Fire Commissioner can certify instructors but not deliver education and training to the levels needed in the province. Since the refocusing of the Commissioner's Office in its approach to training for firefighters, accessibility to and consistency of regularly scheduled training for Firefighter Level 1 has been a problem. The sense in the field is that there is a decline in the availability of training and a shared view that a centralized authority is needed to get the sector back on track and to the level of service it enjoyed a decade ago. There's lots of training going on, but the sector is feeling the effects of the current setup whereby the OFC records only training that is reported to the office. Industry wants to see coordination across the entire sector and a system put in place so that all training is automatically recorded upon completion.

To bring some order to the current setup, the working group recommended that a fire college or similar central authority be established to oversee the development, delivery and certification of education and training for firefighters in Saskatchewan. It was the firefighters' view that organized, systemic,

scheduled and regionalized training would be well subscribed to, and the system would be cost effective. It was also recommended that this agency be linked to the OFC for the purposes of accreditation and certification, and be overseen by an advisory body representing industry stakeholder groups. This body would advise the college on all issues relative to education, training, certification, accreditation, and to ensure that the agency's programs and services remain current with the needs of fire departments are their members.

Courses. There are major variations in the range and type of programs and courses currently offered from department to department, so it was difficult to gain a full listing, their frequency, and the number of members trained each year. The Office of the Fire Commissioner maintains a listing of courses and participants that are reported to the office, and tracks the number of certified firefighters and instructors who are certified; however, there is no centralized tracking of all education and training activities undertaken within the fire/rescue sector. Courses vary with every department pending its size and make-up, and many courses are offered in-house by all departments. With a total of 253 provincially certified and 92 Level II NFPA certified firefighters in the province, the need for access to certification is particularly evident in the volunteer group where there are departments in which nobody holds any form of certification, including the chief. In its initial setup, the OFC used to grant certificates for every training session or course undertaken by firefighters. The paperwork associated with the awarding of certificate became overwhelming as the number of participants and course offerings increased, so it was decided to grant a single certificate upon completion of a training program.

The larger career fire departments provide a range of training covered in NFPA standards, particularly the 1000 series. Much of the training, however, does not carry or lead to certification; rather, it is recognized in-house and is not transferable. Re-certification for First Responder (Medical) and Emergency Medical Technician is also available, depending on the size of a department. Following is a listing of the most common NFPA-based programs provided in larger fire departments through in-house and/or industry partner arrangements. Training for each of the standards requires the completion of multiple courses and hours of training and re-training.

- NFPA 472 -Professional Competence Responders to Hazardous Materials Incidents – 1997
- NFPA 1001 - Firefighter Professional Qualifications – 1997
- NFPA 1002 - Fire Apparatus Driver Operator Professional Qualifications – 1998
- NFPA 1003 - Airport Firefighter Professional Qualifications – 1994
- NFPA 1021 - Fire Officer Professional Qualifications – 1997
- NFPA 1031 - Professional Qualifications for Fire Inspector and Plan Examiner – 1998
- NFPA 1033 - Fire Investigator Professional Qualifications – 1998
- NFPA 1035 - Public Fire and Life Safety Educator Professional Qualifications – 1993
- NFPA 1041 - Fire Services Instructor Professional Qualifications – 1996
- NFPA 1051 - Wildlands Firefighter Professional Qualifications –1995
- NFPA 1500 - Fire Department Occupational Safety and Health Program – 1997
- NFPA 1521 - Fire Department Safety Officer - 1997
- NFPA 1561- Fire Department Incident Management System – 1995
- NFPA 1581 - Fire Department Infection Control Program - 1995
- NFPA 1600 - Disaster Management - 1995
- NFPA 1620 - Pre-incident Planning – 1998
- NFPA 1670 - Operations and Training for Technical Rescue - 1998

From among the foregoing standards, firefighters noted that enhanced education and training are required in the following:

- NFPA 472 - Professional Competence Responders to Hazardous Materials Incidents – 1997
- NFPA 1002 - Fire Apparatus Driver Operator Professional Qualifications - 1998
- NFPA 1021 - Fire Officer Professional Qualifications – 1997
- NFPA 1500 - Fire Department Occupational Health and Safety Officer – 1997
- NFPA 1521 - Fire Department Safety Officer - 1997
- NFPA 1620 - Pre-incident Planning B 1998

While a wide variety of correspondence programs and courses are available in Canada and the United States, in-house training is generally offered and recognized internally in each fire department in the

province. A few members do hold certification from external agencies, but there is no formal recognition or portability of training from one department to another. Firefighters want these issues addressed.

Delivery. There are some 100 Level I and II fire instructors recognized by Saskatchewan's Office of the Fire Commissioner. These instructors provide training to approximately 7000 firefighters that are involved in fire services across the full sector. Despite the apparent number of instructors, the issue of accessibility for members was seen as a significant current and future concern for the industry. Firefighters will readily say that all types of training are being offered, but the problem is that it is all over the place and people don't know what is happening from one department to another. There is no set schedule or systemic offering of courses so people can plan their time and development. The view is that there is no delivery system, there are delivery systems in each fire service location.

Firefighters say there is a clear need to provide province-wide access to a Level I Firefighter program by using a regional approach for delivery. This approach would provide aspiring firefighters with the pre-requisites for entry to any fire department, and other firefighters, especially volunteer departments, would have scheduled basic training available to them. Firefighters who are employed, or who volunteer their services, would be able to avail of professional development opportunities beyond the basic level.

The firefighters' union is concerned about the lack of a provincial training facility because Saskatchewan youth are missing out on opportunities to enter the fire service. Recent hiring trends have seen out-of-province residents with pre-employment training being hired, and the union wants to see local youth, particularly the department's community youth, receive equal opportunity.

At the officer level there is a need for an officer professional development program that focuses on management and leadership skills for training and development. Chiefs, line officers and firefighters support this view as the current promotional system and officer development programs do not adequately prepare members to assume leadership and administrative roles in today's fire departments. There is a national initiative underway to establish a professional designation for fire chiefs and deputy chiefs; however, the remaining officers require professional development as well. There are NFPA standards (e.g. 1000 series) in place to guide the development of a program for officers; what is required is an organized delivery system. Given the need for an officer development program in Saskatchewan, the working group recommended that one be established in the province.

Firefighters from all three types of departments noted that the lack of access to training was a detrimental factor in the recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters. These firefighters hold other full-time jobs and the old practice of giving up a weekend for training is not today's reality. People want access to regular training that is scheduled to meet the needs of the trainees and not the trainers; however, scheduling is a problem for everyone because many trainers also hold employment. The result is that fewer people coming forward to join departments and increasing numbers leaving out of frustration. The Saskatchewan Volunteer Firefighters Association (SVFFA) noted that many of their fire department registrations have only a chief's name listed, but there could be anywhere from 5 to 20 other firefighters. It is easier to give only the chief's name than to be constantly changing membership lists. The statistics on active and inactive fire departments reported by the SVFFA in Part I serve as indicators of this problem. The OFC noted that it had attempted to pass the ownership for training over to local fire departments, but the approach did not take hold at the community level writ large. There are some departments who are very active in providing training to members, while others want a return to the old system of somebody else coming in and being responsible for delivery.

A major training problem for volunteer firefighters is that they are expected to complete the same level of training to be certified as their career counterparts. Firefighters want to see the development of a training program that meets the needs of volunteer firefighters and leads to certification for that group.

Who trains the trainers? Trainers develop knowledge, skills and abilities through a combination of on-the-job experience and exposure to peers, processes and resources in other departments. For the theoretical and instructional aspects of their role, trainers typically complete approved instructor-training programs and are tested and granted certification by the OFC. The current system is that trainers are trained in the following ways:

- By attending courses at fire colleges (e.g., Brandon & Vermilion)

- Certified post-secondary institutions
- Through fire departments

At the SIAST, Woodlands campus, for example, the experience has been that the content and standards of the authorized instructor programs are seen as excessive by participants and instructors. Attrition and failure rates are in the 80% range and the regulatory environment is putting volunteer departments in a bind. The OFC seems to have considerable discretion in how it applies non-certification programs, but remains rigid regarding international standards relative to IFSAC and certification procedures.

New occupational health and safety legislation that came into effect January, 1998, requires all employers to train employees; furthermore, the training must be conducted by a competent instructor. A problem for SIAST and other participants in this study is that the legislation does not define competent. The OFC has stated that, for the purposes of this legislation, it can only vouch for the competence of those instructors who have successfully completed the Fire Service Instructor program authorized by the International Fire Service Training Association (IFSTA).

There was an instance reported in this working group where a fire department had contracted with an out-of-province provider to come to Saskatchewan and train its members. When the OFC assessed the participants upon the completion of training, none passed the certification process. When this type of outcome is realized either the training was not of a standard required to meet assessment requirements, or the exam tested for items that were not included in the curriculum. To avoid a future occurrence of this nature there should be a mechanism in place whereby trainers and the OFC evaluators meet to establish expectations before training of this scope begins. This interface is essential because IFSAC and NFPA standards and regulations for certification bind the OFC in terms of assessment requirements leading to professional qualifications.

Future Direction for Sector Development

The consensus of the working group members was that the future development of Saskatchewan's fire services lay in the establishment of a provincial training authority that operates at-arms-length from the OFC. Such an authority would fit within the framework and spirit of the Saskatchewan Training Strategy (Saskatchewan Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training, 1996) and serve a number of human resource development and organizational needs for the fire service. Needs include coordinating the development and delivery of education and training; revising and setting standards; monitoring and responding to changes in technology, work and training requirements; as well as providing a central leadership role within the sector. This agency should provide diploma, certificate and degree programs to firefighters who are involved in, or aspire to be involved in, specialized areas (i.e. training and human resource development, administration, occupational health and safety, fire service technologist, community education.

Firefighters proposed that the agency be based on a partnership concept using existing in-province and out-of province providers in the development of a Saskatchewan-based fire education and training agency that is directed by sector stakeholders. The focus should be on using Saskatchewan-based resources and expertise, and there must be a mechanism in place to assure compliance with standards.

Suggestions on the form of authority included:

1. the establishment of a fire college based on a partnership model using the expertise of in-province and out-of-province providers
2. the creation of a dedicated office to co-ordinate education, training and certification across the entire fire/rescue sector

The preference of firefighters was the establishment of an at-arms-length fire college based on a partnership model that includes post-secondary institutions, industry, the Office of the Fire Commissioner, firefighter associations, and other partner agencies. Because it is a publicly funded institution that already exists, the Saskatchewan Professional Firefighters Association saw SIAST as being ideally positioned to be the coordinating agency for the partnership. In concert with the OFC and other regulatory bodies, SIAST was recommended to serve as central registry for all matters related to education, training, certification and accreditation.

Firefighters said that, in whatever form it is established, the training institution must operate under an advisory board consisting of representatives from sector stakeholders groups, and the board must be comprised of, appointed by, and accountable to sector groups. It should be established by the Minister of Saskatchewan Municipal Government

through industry consultation and nomination from stakeholder groups. Membership should be shielded from changes in municipal and provincial governments. Firefighters stressed that the college or agency must utilize a regionalized and distance delivery approach so firefighters can access its programs and services from wherever they live in Saskatchewan.

In addition to the services listed above, firefighters recommended that the college be responsible for working with appropriate authorities and agencies to:

- standardize training for fire services members in Saskatchewan
- establish recognized credentials that are portable across the sector
- establish standards and training programs that reflect the level of service provided in volunteer versus career departments
- conduct annual reviews of standards and credentials through a standing sector-wide advisory committee.
- deliver or broker courses that enable firefighters to meet NFPA requirements
- diversify training into areas such as EMS, infectious diseases, critical incident stress management, liability, litigation, and career counselling.
- offer training in interpersonal skills such as communication and leadership.
- ensure that training providers remain current with industry advancements in terms of knowledge, skills and abilities.

It was recommended that the development of a fire college should be consistent with and tie into the Saskatchewan Training Strategy.

Other Issues

In addition to the need for a training institution, firefighters flagged the following areas as requiring attention in the future development of the sector and its human resources.

Certification

- The training and certification of firefighters should depend on level of service provided.
- All education and training should maintain currency with standards adopted by Saskatchewan. Future certification standards may also include medical and other public safety agencies.
- All moves to certification in sector occupational classifications must recognize experience as being important (e.g. grandfathering clause for existing members).

Accreditation

- To be accredited, all delivery agencies and individual providers of education and training must meet Saskatchewan standards.

Delivery

- Saskatchewan's fire/rescue sector needs a collaborative model of organization for setting standards and its future agenda for education and training to meet those standards.
- Firefighters need better access to NFPA 1001 training, and a regionalized approach is needed to ensure access throughout Saskatchewan.
- People who deliver education and training in Saskatchewan's fire/rescue sector must be approved and/or certified by an educational authority.
- A centralized records system must be established for reporting and recording the education and training activities of all firefighters and the providers.

Professional development

- The current Train the Trainer program is in need of revision and the professional development of fire instructors must be a focal point of future human resource development.
- Training would be easier to access and be more cost-efficient if it were scheduled, available in, and applicable to Saskatchewan's needs.
- There is a need for all chief officers and company officers to have access to standardized education/training courses and programs.
- Professional development programs and courses should be organized relative to rank and level of responsibility within the rank.
- Education re: litigation is required for all stakeholders as this issue is becoming more important, both to the individual firefighter, the fire department, municipal government, and the municipality served.

Sector development

- In addition to guiding the development and operation of a fire college, firefighters see the college's governing body guiding the sector's overall future development. Key functions of this body would be to ensure that provincial standards are revised on an ongoing basis and work with regulatory agencies on matters relevant to the sector. In its dual role, the body would link all its activities to education and training so programs remain current to meet these standards, and the skills of delivery agents are updated to meet industry requirements.
- Municipal governments in Saskatchewan need to be provided with educational programming around their role and responsibilities in fire protection, particularly in relation to their responsibilities for the support and maintenance of fire departments and the recruitment, training and development of members.

Sustainability

To succeed, a Saskatchewan-based education and training agency will require:

- funding sources be identified and sustained.
- commitment from and participation of the sector's stakeholders.
- an adequate pool of qualified instructors
- an inventory of industry training sites that would be available to the training agency.
- developing and maintaining partnerships with provincial, federal, and international partners.
- a mechanism for seconding people from industry to education and training roles
- human resource planning.
- compliance

Sustainability will be enhanced if education and training programs and services keep pace with emerging trends and technologies. On-going needs assessments will ensure that training is meeting the needs of stakeholders.

Office of the Fire Commissioner (OFC)

The OFC clearly needs to work on its public relations with sector partners and in helping the sector develop an industry-wide board of directors or advisory board that provides the OFC and a training agency with input on the education and training and other needs of the sector. The OFC's withdrawal from education and training is seen as detrimental to the sector and personnel are seen as distanced from and less than helpful within the sector. Firefighters recognize that the OFC has lost a significant number of staff in the last five years, and, apart from resolutions passed at conventions, no concerted effort has been made to address the effects on the sector.

Funding of Training

Municipal firefighters would avail of training offered by a Saskatchewan-based training institution with a provision that the training was of the quality that met the standards and expectations of fire departments. Discussion on the issue of funding for training led to the study team being asked to look into the situation regarding taxes being collected on fire insurance and automobile premiums in Saskatchewan. The understanding was that the initial intent of the tax was for the development and administration of the fire service in Saskatchewan, including education and training. Members had three questions:

1. How much money is being collected?
2. Where is the money going?
3. Could the money be used to support training for the sector?

This issue also came up in other working groups and at the steering committee level. A section to follow reports on the research into this issue.

Sub-Sector Summary

A theme running through the working group discussion, interviews and documentation related to this sub-sector was that, to ensure human resources are prepared for future demands, firefighters need access to scheduled, systemic, and quality education and training on a regional basis. There is a need to establish standards and certification procedures that are relevant to and understood by all firefighters and trainers, and to place education and training under the auspices of a provincial fire college or agency that would be responsible for training and development within the fire/rescue sector.

The consensus of the working group and interviewees was that the problems and issues facing the sub-sector were more problematic than individual members had realized. The sector members have no central agency to rally around in terms of having input into their training and development needs as a group of firefighters. There are associations, but these tend to be driven by intra-group and focused interests versus sector-wide and collective interests. Every fire department is inward looking and the absence of a collective focus has sector members frustrated with their development opportunities.

While a range of education and training programs is available inside and outside Saskatchewan, there is no overarching plan for human resource development within the fire/rescue sector. The OFC serves as a central agency for accreditation and certification; however, there is no defined training plan, no prior learning assessment recognition process in place, and no mechanism to provide for mobility and portability of training credits across the sector. This need can be addressed by using SIAST as a coordinating agency for accreditation, delivery and certification and establishing a sector-wide advisory board similar to the model used to guide apprenticeship training and certification in the province. A "joint council" approach to sector formation may serve as a model

(e.g. representatives of the various fire departments, unions, industry, First Nations, regulatory bodies, and education and training provider agencies. The advisory board should be shielded from changes in municipal and provincial governments.

Summary of Sub-Sector Recommendations

The participants in the Career, Composite, Volunteer Fire/Rescue Services working group made the following recommendations for the future development of their sub-sector and the sector as a whole. It is recommended that:

1. the fire department jurisdictions have traditionally hired and trained recruits to their own entry levels, future recruitment practices for career and composite departments should focus only on candidates who have completed a pre-employment training program and are trained and certified to NFPA 1001 standards.

2. to build fire department standards to adequate levels for meeting future demands, all firefighters should be certified to a minimum of Level II Firefighter. It was further recommended that, should this requirement were implemented, a grandfathering approach be used to award certification to existing career and composite firefighters.

3. using existing NFPA standards as guidelines, an officer development program and professional designation be established for Saskatchewan. Given a current national initiative to establish a professional development program and designation for chiefs and deputy chiefs, the Saskatchewan initiative should focus on the development needs of line officers and aspiring officers.

4. to bring some order the current setup for education and training of firefighters, SIAST be designated to establish a fire college or similar central agency based on a partnership model to oversee the coordination, development, delivery, certification and accreditation of education and training for firefighters in Saskatchewan. It was further recommended that the agency provide for systematic and regionalized delivery of education and training programs and services, particularly through the use of distance delivery technology.

5. any education and training agency that might be established be overseen by an industry advisory board to ensure that programs and services remain current with industry needs.

6. in addition to the foregoing recommendations 5, 6, and 7, it was further recommended that the fire college or central agency be responsible for working with appropriate authorities and agencies to:

   - establish standards and training programs that reflect the level of service provided in volunteer versus career departments.
   - establish recognized credentials that are portable across the sector.
   - conduct annual reviews of standards and credentials through a standing sector-wide advisory committee.
   - diversify training into areas such as EMS, infectious diseases, critical incident stress management, liability, litigation, and career counselling.
   - offer training in interpersonal skills such as communications, tea.nwork and leadership.
   - ensure that training providers remain current with industry advancements in terms of knowledge, skills and abilities.

7. the development of a fire college be consistent with and tie into the Saskatchewan Training Strategy.

Outcomes of Industrial Fire/Rescue Services Working Group

The Industrial Fire Services working group had representatives from the following industries: mining, pulp and paper, power generation, oil refining, safety associations, fertilizer production, fire protection sales organizations, training providers, unions, and oil and gas pipelines (Appendix B). In its first session the group discussed the current state of industrial fire services in terms of regulatory agencies that govern the various industrial sites, particularly the provincial occupational health and safety regulations and legislation covering the provision of fire/rescue services in above- and underground mines.

This was the first time an industry group had been assembled to discuss education and training for fire/rescue services, and it was obvious to the

participants that the issues around education and training in their sub-sector were not unlike those of municipal firefighters. Each industrial site carries out its own array of education and training programs, there is no standardization of training and no certification for firefighters, and one site does not know what the one a few miles away is doing at any given time.

In their second session the group focused on designing a training framework of modules that would lead to certification for industrial firefighters. The participants then discussed the type of advisory and delivery systems required to guide the development and standardization of training for the industrial sub-sector, and they looked for linkages into the fire/rescue sector as a whole. Following is an overview of the current state of the sub-sector as it relates to industrial firefighters.

Investment in Fire Protection Equipment and Training

The number of factors that enter into the fire services budgetary processes from plant to plant in Saskatchewan made it problematic to determine the overall investment in industrial fire services. Some companies have centralized office costs coupled with individual plant costs at each work site. Within each site, the costs are further broken down into individual departments and expenditures on safety, training, rescue, and fire are typically intertwined. Like other fire service providers, however, industrial fire departments require the typical array of equipment, instructors and curriculum that's required in a municipal fire department, and each site has a full range of fire protection equipment and provides the training required to meet the site's needs. The study was, however, able to create a profile of industrial sites.

Companies purchase fire trucks, ambulances, emergency response vehicles, sprinkler and other protection systems, communications and security systems, breathing apparatus, compressors, pumps, hoses, nozzles, protective clothing, extinguishers, gas detection systems, and the list goes on. Work sites also invest in training materials such as air, chemicals, smoke machines, gas/diesel fuel, manuals, First Aid and CPR materials, and more. An additional cost to industry is the responsibility to train on-site contractors to ensure that they and their employees comply with plant requirements and know the safety and fire-related procedures in the event of emergencies.

On the human resource side, industrial sites have full-time offices or departments (e.g. safety department) staffed with personnel whose responsibility it is to manage and provide for the training of firefighters and rescue personnel, and they pay wages to employees involved in firefighting training and call-ins. One can typically find fire instructors from local municipal fire departments serving as trainers in industrial sites, and vice versa. It is also commonplace to find municipal firefighters serving as members of a company's fire/rescue team, and vice versa.

When direct and indirect costs are considered, members noted that is not unusual to see industrial sites investing in the range of $250,000.00 to $1m dollars annually in the maintenance of fire/rescue services. Given that one fire truck can run into the $150,000.00 to $200,000.00 range, one SCBA unit can cost $4,000.00 to $5,000.00, and one communications system can run to $50,000.00 per site for companies with more than one operation (e.g. mining companies), capital expenditures can push the investment up significantly. Participants noted that the oil industry tends to set the ceiling for investment.

Figures provided by a Saskatchewan mine site show that the current budget for fire/rescue services involving members of the bargaining unit includes $120,000.00 to cover the wages of any employees involved in fire/rescue training, and an additional $40,000.000 to cover the costs associated with the training undertaken by the designated 10-member fire brigade. The company allocates approximately $25,000.00 annually to cover the cost of capital purchase and replacement of training materials, and in the range of $60,000.00 for First Aid and Emergency Response training. The budget for supervisory and other non-bargaining unit members of fire/rescue teams results in an additional expenditure of $32,000.000. At this site, the current direct annual investment in fire/rescue services is $277,000.00, and the site supervisor felt that it would serve as an average investment at mine sites.

An oil processing plant reported that it budgets $200,00.00 for it regular day-to-day fire services operations. The plant budget for fire/rescue team education and training is set at $100,00.00, and this does not include the wages of fire team members. The refinery purchases off-site training and the plant's firefighters also provide training to local communities

and organizations. This arrangement helps to reduce training cost for all parties as trainers share their expertise back and forth. This $300,000.00 investment would be an annual benchmark for that industry, notwithstanding the initial and ongoing capital investment.

Overall, participants estimated the overall investment in industrial fire services to be in the tens of millions of dollars annually, and training is a priority on the industrial agenda.

Entry-Level Prerequisites

Industrial firefighters tend to be recruited through a collective agreement or employee association process; usually through in-plant postings. In the vast majority of cases, employees are already working in a plant classification and offer their services to the company on a volunteer basis. Some employers use a point-rated application form that gives preference to people with training through local fire brigades, rescue training, or Emergency Medical Technician certification. Other selection criteria include employees with knowledge of plant facilities and processes, and trade knowledge of such areas as hoisting/rigging, electrical and piping systems. A selection committee reviews application forms and rates each applicant on a point system. Some companies have a fire requirement built into the job classification, while others place different emphasis on whether firefighters are day shift or night shift workers. In the case of remote mine sites, for example, isolation makes it critical that the right mix of people and classifications be available and trained.

While there is no age pre-requisite, it is understood that the physical requirements of industrial firefighting, rescue and training call for people with good physical conditioning. For volunteer and part-time members of industry fire/rescue groups, a medical is the only pre-requisite; however, employers may look for or require any combination of the foregoing pre-requisites.

While there are no pre-requisites for management/supervisory positions, some companies provide post-appointment training at colleges such as the one located in Vermilion, Alberta. On an industry-wide basis, again there are no entry standards re: education and training for supervisory roles; the only common-core standard is a medical.

Providers, Courses and Delivery of Education and Training

Following is an overview of existing programs and services offered in Saskatchewan's industrial fire departments. The range and depth of courses vary by company and type of industry.

Providers. Industrial fire departments range from those having a single supervisor and volunteer teams of firefighters who hold employment in other plant occupations, to a combined fire/rescue/first aid operation having a supervisor, 6-8 full-time members, and volunteer crews. Depending on the type of setup and nature of the industry, a company may provide all in-plant training and only send out trainers to be trained in new technology skill areas. The trainers then return to provide in-plant training. More often than not it is the seller of technology to a company that provides the initial on-site training. From among many providers to industry, following is a listing of some provider groups of fire/rescue education and training to Saskatchewan's industrial firefighters.

In-plant providers:

- Plant supervisors
- Plant safety and training personnel
- On-site employees who have particular skill sets or certifications (e.g. rigging, First Aid)
- Teams train themselves in some instances, particularly with ongoing, repetitive training.

External providers:

- Vermilion Fire College
- Brandon Emergency Services College
- Sales agents (e.g. Levitt Safety)
- Saskatchewan Safety Council
- Government departments and agencies responsible for safety
- Local municipal fire department trainers
- In-province and out-of-province consultants, agencies and institutions
- Trainers from other industrial sites
- American institutions

Industry used to avail of the Office of Fire Commissioner's training services when it had a training mandate; however, this service is no longer available. Some companies do, however, continue to borrow training materials from the OFC.

Despite the availability and use of training providers, a major problem for industrial supervisors and firefighters is that there is no framework of courses or avenues leading to certification for industrial firefighters in Saskatchewan. Company training delivered by company trainers carries internal recognition, but not certification. The Occupational Health and Safety Regulations are silent on what standards make a firefighter or instructor competent as contained in both the regulations and the Code of Practice for Firefighters (Saskatchewan Labour, 1997). This vagueness leave those responsible for fire/rescue training not knowing to what level to train people, or what kind of instructor is deemed to be competent in the event of something happening. Industrial firefighters hold a very strong view that the term competent must be defined by setting clearly defined standards for instructors and providing education and training programs so providers can attain the relevant certification. The OFC will say that competent means being certified by the OFC, but accessing training for trainers that is focused on industry requirements is a problem.

Courses

The range and type of programs and courses currently offered vary from type of industry and from site to site, even within the same industry. In the case of the mining industry, for example, a mine can be an underground, open-pit, or slurry operation. Based on the range of courses, variety of industrial settings, and requirements for general and site-specific training, it was impractical to attempt a full listing of offerings. Across the sub-sector, however, there are a number of common-core training topics that firefighters identified, and for which training is based on NFPA 600 standard for Industrial Fire Brigades, or other standards. Following is a listing of some common-core courses/programs and examples of site-specific offerings of some companies.

Common-core

- Security training
- Emergency Medical Technician
- First Aid
- Cardio Pulmonary Recusitation
- First Responder
- Firefighter Level I and II
- Basic Firefighting
- Extinguisher training
- Fire apparatus
- Introductory level of confined space training: Expansion of this training is required
- Incident command
- Rescue techniques
- Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System
- Emergency Planning for Industry
- Occupational health and safety courses

Fire-safety orientations and annual refresher courses are usually delivered for all employees.

Site-specific

In defining who should complete what courses, some industries have targeted occupational groupings to be sure that employees other than firefighters know their responsibilities in the event of an emergency. In the oil and chemical industries, for example, there are 3 levels of in-house training offered to operators.

- Basic (for new people)
- Operators must take First Responder training, fire training, and attain a competency level set by the employer
- Incident Command

In the mining industry, a safety orientation is provided for all new staff and a designated number on each shift (e.g. 24, or 6 persons per shift on 4 week-long shifts in a remote mine site) are designated as Emergency Responders. The responders complete an in-house program of 12 modules and First Aid, CPR, Confined Space and Rescue training programs. There is no formal recognition or certification for responders involved in surface training; however, underground responders receive provincial certification from Saskatchewan Labour, and this certification has inter-provincial, industry recognition.

One area of training that is significant for the overall sector is where companies and local fire departments have mutual aid agreements and conduct joint training for members of both departments. Industrial firefighters would like to see more of this cost-effective training being done; however, what is needed is a central agency that would serve as a communications channel so industry partners can know which companies and fire departments are doing what, when and where. This network would increase the courses and types of training sites available to firefighters, reduce training costs, and provide for greater linkages within the sector.

Current delivery system The supervisors in this study noted that they carry considerable responsibility for the delivery of on-site training and they need a delivery framework that leads to certification for firefighters. As previously noted, the current OH&S regulations are too vague to be of any use in defining a training strategy for each work site. Without a framework, supervisors wonder about the types of courses being offered, and whether they are meeting regulatory requirements; in essence, they operate in a vacuum.

The frequency of courses depends on regulations governing each type of industry, so frequency may range from every week to once a year. Following are examples of basic firefighter training provided in provincial workplaces:

Profile of a typical remote mine site fire/rescue service:

- There are 12 firefighters on each 7-day shift at a mine site. Given that there are two shifts per mine and crews alternate a week in and a week out, each mine requires 2 crews to provide coverage = 12 firefighters x 2 shifts = 24 firefighters per site.
- Each firefighter trains four hours on each 7-day shift for 8 hours of training per month. This provides each shift crew with 8 hours of training per month for a total of 84 hours of training per person, per year.
- First Aid training is provided every 3 years.
- CPR training is provided on an annual basis.

Education and training is company driven and additional specialized courses are offered on site or in- or out-of province as required.

Profile of a typical local mine site fire/rescue service:

- There are 40 firefighters per site as a each site as a site has 4 fire crews with 10 members per crew
- Members receive 4 hours of training per month
- On the day shift when most employees are on site, there are additional fire crew members (e.g., 15) at each site for a total of 25 firefighters on the day shift; a shift is 12 hours.

The company's investment in wages for trainees can be single or double time, depending on the employees involved and whether training is scheduled during regular working hours or overtime.

Profile of a typical oil industrial site fire/rescue service:

- There are 15-20 fire crew members per shift
- There are 4 shifts
- Each fire crew member receives 64 hours of training per year.
- Each rescue crew receives 120 hours of training per year

As with municipal fire departments, industrial training is offered largely in-plant, and is recognized internally by each employer. The OH&S regulations and its provincial Code of Practice for Fire Fighters require each employer to keep training records. Firefighters note, however, that this is a root of their problem; records are kept at each site of employment. What is needed is a centralized system that tracks all the training taken by all firefighters, anywhere. There is a great need for coordination and for some mechanism to link firefighters and sector organizations so more training sites are available to the sector; so training can be done more cost effectively, and so mutual benefits are derived by all parties. There is a need for provincial certification of industrial firefighters and a training framework to guide course selection and delivery toward certification. Setting a training standard for industrial firefighters is seen as the first toward industry-wide recognition and portability of training.

Who trains the trainers? Industry trainers tend to be individuals who have demonstrated that they have the requisite knowledge, skills and abilities to provide training to their fellow employees. As in many occupations, the skills for most of the training in an industrial fire service are closely linked to one's knowledge of the plant's operation. While trainers develop plant knowledge through on-the-job experience, they do need to know the theory and practice of instruction. To help in this area, industry needs access to fire instructor train-the-trainer programs designed with industrial settings in mind. As previously noted, linked to this need is a requirement to define the term competent as contained in OH&S regulations and there is a need for the Provincial Mine Act to provide for the certification of all mine firefighters. The consensus was that firefighter trainers need a provincial core group to sit down and develop a training and trainer certification framework that is accepted by training and regulatory agencies (e.g. OH&S, The Office of Fire Commissioner, international bodies), and by industry itself.

Future Direction for Sector Development

Participants identified three key requirements that would help shape the future of human resource

development for their sub-sector:

1. The development of an industry-wide training program leading to certification of industrial firefighters.
2. The development of a professional development program and designation for fire services supervisors.
3. The availability of a train-the-trainer program that meets the needs of industry instructors and settings.

Following is an overview of each issue.

Certification The issue of certification for industrial firefighters was the most important topic for the working group and industrial fire service supervisors interviewed from this sub-sector. Mining sector participants, in particular, were concerned about the fact that their counterparts who serve as members of mine rescue crews have access to certification, while members of fire crews do not. The consensus was that the future development of Saskatchewan's fire services lay in the establishment of a standardized industrial firefighters program having core and optional modules leading to industry-wide (e.g. employers, Fire Commissioner, Saskatchewan Labour, Saskatchewan Mines, Insurance Companies, Canadian Standards Board, and others) recognition and certification. A number of site-specific modules may also be required by some employers; however, the absence of these modules would not affect certification.

In response to this need, participants developed a proposed framework of modules based on NFPA and other regulatory standards (e.g. OH&S) and drawn from IFSTA's Essentials of Fire Fighting, 3rd Ed, which would lead to the certification of industrial firefighters in the Province of Saskatchewan. **Note:** Participants knew that there was a 4th edition of the IFSTA text in print; however, the general view was that there is very little difference between the content of both texts. This issue will have to be dealt with by the agencies involved in the overall process leading to the adoption of an acceptable set of modules for meeting the required standard.

The module selection process was premised on the fact that, while there are standards (e.g. NFPA 600) which industrial trainers can follow, there is no industry-wide set of modules in place to guide the training and certification of industrial firefighters in Saskatchewan. The framework would also help industry professionals and supervisors to establish an industry-wide definition, or benchmark, for the term competent as outlined in provincial health and safety and mine regulations regarding trainer qualifications.

The framework consists of core, optional, and site-specific modules. This profile was deemed necessary because there are core training requirements that every firefighter should have, and that training is available in all work sites. The optional modules are not available in every work site, but a combination of three to four of them are. It is proposed that all firefighters complete the core modules and any four of the six optional modules. Because First Responder provides First Aid and CPR training, firefighters can complete **either** the First Responder module or both First Aid and CPR, which would constitute a single module toward certification. The site-specific modules are listed so each employer can add to the training requirements for firefighters in their particular industrial settings. Industrial Firefighter certification, however, will only require the completion of the core and any four optional modules.

Proposed Industrial Firefighter Certification Program
Core requirements (NFPA/IFSTA):

1.	Module 1	Fire Behaviour
2.	Modules 3a and 3b	Personal Protective Equipment
3.	Module 5b	Extrication (Machinery Entanglement)
4.	Module 7	Ventilation
5.	Module 8	Ladders
6.	Module 9	Water Supply
7.	Module 10	Fire Streams
8.	Module 11	Hose
9.	Module 12	Fire Control
10.	Module 19	Fire Fighter Safety

Optional requirements:

1. Haz Mat Awareness
2. First Responder or First Aid and Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)
3. Emergency Response Organization
4. Incident Management System
5. Fixed Detection/Protection Systems
6. Industrial Rescue (excluding Confined Space)

Site-specific requirements:

1. Ropes

2. Pumper Operation (Ariel)
3. Vehicle Extrication
4. Foam
5. First Responder
6. Forcible Entry
7. Salvage
8. Overhaul
9. Fire Cause
10. Emergency Medical Technician Recertification
11. Tank Fires
12. Haz Mat - Dangerous Goods
13. Building Construction
14. First Responder
15. Electrical Apparatus
16. Industrial Rescue (Trench)
17. High Angle - Stockpile
18. Confined Space = Prerequisites are Rope Rescue (Operations Level), Trench Rescue (Operations Level), and Hazardous Materials (Operations Level)

The working group members noted that IFSAC certification is key to the proposed Industrial Firefighter designation. This certification is dependant upon meeting standards set by bodies such as the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and Occupational Health and Safety Association (OHSA). Recognition and portability of credits and credentials are central to the establishment of an Industrial Firefighter Certification Program. The short-term aim is that people who move from one employer to another, or from one company's work site to another, can carry their certification and recognition within the sub-sector. The long-term aim is to have all firefighter education and training linked across the entire sector so sector members can avail of and receive credit for all training undertaken, regardless of site.

While it would be good to see training recognized across the entire fire/rescue sector (e.g. people who receive training in a mine site would be granted credits toward certification as a municipal firefighter, and vice versa), industrial sites would be pleased to complete the first step and have a recognized industrial program in place in the near future. Given the presence of mutual aid agreements between industrial and municipal fire services, and the fact that many members of industrial fire brigades are also members of local municipal fire departments, it seems logical that sector partners would want training that is both recognized and portable across the sector. As noted, this approach would lead to partners expanding the conjoint delivery approaches for training and providing more access to training for firefighters.

To move the certification process forward, it was recommended that a provincial core group be formed to sit down and do as the mining industry has done for underground rescue teams; take the proposed profile of modules and pursue industry agreement on a certification framework. The framework would have to be negotiated with and accepted by regulatory agencies (e.g. OH&S, the Office of Fire Commissioner, international bodies) and industry itself.

The process required to have a training framework adopted and maintained will require the following activities:

1. Setting up a system for circulating, promoting and gaining the adoption of the standards by employers and industry stakeholders. This step would require the participation of regulatory, certifying, and accrediting bodies, training providers, and industrial stakeholders.

2. Establishing a Saskatchewan-based agency that would coordinate and monitor the development and delivery of programs and services, and certify Industrial Firefighters. This agency would identify current in-province and out-of-province providers of education and training, and establish a system of partnerships to utilize these providers and develop strategies for filling any gaps in the provincial education and training network.

3. Establish an industry advisory committee, including the Office of the Fire Commissioner and regulatory agencies involved in industrial health and safety and fire-related issues. This committee would advise the training agency on current and future industry-related training and education issues in Saskatchewan.

Accreditation

Accreditation is a concern to industry only in the sense that they want to be sure that provider agencies are accredited to deliver training and that accredited training is delivered. The view is that if Saskatchewan had a centralized education and training agency, accreditation would not be a problem. The agency

would work with responsible agencies to ensure that Saskatchewan delivery partners, including industrial fire instructors, were meeting the requisite standards.

Future delivery

Industrial firefighters and supervisors see the benefits of using a partnership approach toward building a future delivery system for Saskatchewan's fire/rescue sector. A partnership would allow industry to share its training sites and expertise with sector groups, and avail of the equipment and expertise available in the other sites. The delivery network should also include out-of-province and American providers that offer specialized programs so certification and recognition linkages are maintained.

The working group noted, and as reported in Part I, that a number of initiatives have been undertaken to establish a fire college in Saskatchewan. The Regina office of Trans Canada Pipelines Inc. undertook the most comprehensive research found in this area in 1997. The company's analysis of the market potential for training in Saskatchewan revealed that an agency would be cost-effective and profitable from the outset. The analysis included the potential for in-province and out-of-province purchasers of training.

Industry would support the establishment of a provincial training authority and would purchase training provided is quality and relevant, and if the delivery system is responsive and meets the needs of industry. Before moving to establish a separate provincial training institution for the fire/rescue sector, however, it was recommended that the idea be researched and a cost/return analysis be carried out. An alternative recommendation was to create a partnership agency comprised of industry providers that was coordinated through a single window approach (e.g., SIAST or the 1980s idea of a Principal of Training office). Experience would tell if a separate agency could be supported. The view was that, however it is established, the agency would be utilized by industry and be viable if it offered relevant, quality, and responsive programs. The agency must be mandated to work with appropriate authorities and agencies to standardize training for the entire sector, and to establish credentials that are recognized and portable across the sector. To ensure that programs and services reflect industry's needs, it was recommended that an industry advisory body be set up to work with whatever form of agency is created in Saskatchewan. The immediate concern, however, lies with bringing some kind of structure to the industrial sub-sector; an institution would be beneficial after an industry structure is in place.

Professional development

To ensure a level of credibility and acknowledgment of competency across industry, participants outlined the need for a professional development (PD) program leading to a professional designation for supervisors. People in industry are selected for supervisory roles for a number of reasons, primarily because they are seen as being competent in the field, and they may or may not receive any training in managing a fire/rescue service. A professional development program and designation would provide individuals with a better understanding of the regulatory structure affecting industry, incident command systems, the principles of management and leadership for fire services, and the basic theory, principles and practices of training design and instruction. Following the establishment of a standardized training program for industrial firefighters, supervisors recommend that a professional designation be established for them.

Following are examples of topics for supervisor PD:

- Emergency Response
- Disaster Plan Training
- Communications in Emergency Response
- Spill Response
- Transportation of Dangerous Goods
- Risk Management and Analysis
- Critical Incident Stress Management and Intervention

Supervisors also need training in areas such as Due Diligence, in the requirements and implications of OH&S Regulations, and in the basic theory and practice of developing and delivering training and development programs and services. It is expected that environmental concerns will for a primary basis of future training.

In addition, all industrial fire service members need access to a range of ongoing professional development opportunities. For example, fire instructors need updating in the application and use of new technologies, environmental issues, legislation, and instructional methodologies; and, firefighters need constant updating in new technology and the associated firefighting techniques. As a

presentation of Oklahoma State University (Carlson, 1999) at the 1999 Saskatchewan Association of Fire Chiefs conference revealed, today's synthetics and lightweight building materials burn 2-3 times hotter than conventional materials, and there are always new technologies, tools and chemicals entering the market. Firefighters need constant updating so they know what they are facing at a fire or chemical spill, and supervisors need ongoing development in managing the new technology and emerging approaches to training and development.

Sector development

Industrial firefighters would like to see the establishment of an industry advisory body that would work with educational and regulatory authorities to ensure that fire-related programs and services remain current and appropriate in meeting industry needs. This body would review standards, set quality benchmarks for education and training agencies and instructors, and serve as the linkage between industrial fire services and other sector partners. In the long-term, the fire/rescue sector needs an overall advisory body having sector-wide representation to guide the future direction and development of the sector as a whole.

Sustainability.

To gain buy-in and sustained commitment from industrial fire services, a Saskatchewan-based education and training agency will have to operate through a consultative framework and offer quality, appropriate and responsive programs and services. The most effective approach recommended would be to use existing resources and provide SIAST with the necessary initial funding to coordinate education and training for the sector. Alternate sources of funding must be identified and sustained as the agency develops toward self-sufficiency.

In addition to the foregoing, a sustainability framework should include an inventory of training sites and resources that would available to the training agency. It will also require a means for people to be trained as instructors and be released from their industry training roles to serve an institutional role on an as-needed basis. Sustainability is also linked to the offering of programs and services that are timely and quality, and that will draw firefighters and others from other provinces and sites to Saskatchewan.

Office of the Fire Commissioner (OFC)

The OFC can help industry in the establishment and maintenance of mutual aid agreements with local municipalities. The OFC needs to revisit its approach to service delivery with industrial sector partners, particularly in the area of public relations and how industry needs are handled and met. Like municipal firefighters, industrial fire services used to avail of education and training through the OFC, and they appreciated having that contact, access and assistance with training. There is, however, a current perception the sector is adrift in terms of training and development, and the OFC has not taken a lead role in addressing that problem. The OFC needs to play a helpful role in the development of a training program that provides access to certification of industrial firefighters. Rather than telling people what they will have to do, the OFC should work with stakeholders to help them understand the basis of and rationale for decision making.

Funding

Participants noted that companies are always looking for ways to make training cost-effective and to reduce the extra costs associated with out-of-province travel and training. In the opinion of industrial firefighter supervisors, industry will support a central training agency and purchase in-province training if it is of the level and quality that industry expects. In terms of ongoing funding for a provincial training agency, it was recommended that the province start out with a coordinating approach and use existing in-province and out-of-province resources in a partnership delivery model. Based on experience with this approach, the sector can decide what the future direction and development of human resource development should look like in Saskatchewan. Should the level of training and revenue from it show a need for an expanding and moving to an alternate delivery approach, the decisions can be based on a realistic versus speculative basis. Should the initiative not pan out, then the province will not have lost any significant amount of public investment and the sector can revisit the issue.

Like members of the municipal firefighter working group, industrial firefighters discussed the issue of tax levies being collected on fire insurance and automobile premiums in Saskatchewan, and they asked whether any of the money could be used to support a provincial training agency.

Sub-Sector Summary

The focus of this working group's discussion, interviews and documentation related to this sub-sector was on the need for a training program leading to certification of industrial firefighters. Members constructed a framework of training modules that would meet the needs of industry fire services and, hopefully, lead to certification of firefighters. What is now required is a process for gaining formal acceptance by regulatory agencies and employers, followed by field implementation. To ensure that the training would conform to accepted standards (e.g. NFPA), the modules were selected from current curriculum used by industry (e.g. IFSTA) as well as curriculum from other regulatory and training agencies (e.g. St. John Ambulance, Saskatchewan Safety Council). Industrial fire service supervisors need access to a professional development program leading to a professional designation.

Current industry practices are not cost-effective as every site is following its own agenda, little communication or sharing of resources occurs, and any training that is provided carries in-plant recognition only. Industrial fire services see the need for and would support the establishment of a centralized fire training agency in Saskatchewan provided it offered relevant and quality programming. The recommended approach was to establish a coordinating agency that would have a mandate to provide for the development and delivery of programs and services, and to work with authorities in granting accreditation and certification.

Because industrial fire service members have no central agency or industrial fire service association to utilize as a forum, the participants appreciated the opportunity to come together in this study and share their views on the pressing issues that require addressing in their roles and workplaces. Based on this experience, supervisors want an annual forum established for the purposes of reviewing industry standards and the associated education and training programs. They also stated the need for an advisory body that deals with issues on a sector-wide basis. Both these bodies can be linked into an advisory board for the sector's proposed training agency.

Summary of Sub-Sector Recommendations:

Participants in the Industrial Fire/Rescue Services working group made the following recommendations to guide the future development of their sub-sector and the fire/rescue sector as a whole. It is recommended that:

1. the framework of modules outlined in the Certification section of this sub-section be adopted to form the basis of an Industrial Firefighter Certification Program leading to the certification of industrial firefighters in Saskatchewan. It is further recommended that moving the adoption process forward and maintaining future standards requires:
    a. setting up a system for circulating, promoting and gaining the adoption of the standards by employers and industry stakeholders. This step would require the participation of regulatory, certifying, and accrediting bodies, training providers, and industrial stakeholders.
    b. establishing a Saskatchewan-based agency that would coordinate and monitor the development and delivery of programs and services, and certify Industrial Firefighters. This agency would identify current in-province and out-of-province providers of education and training, and establish a system of partnerships to utilize these providers and develop strategies for filling any gaps in the provincial education and training network.
    c. establishing an industry advisory committee, including the Office of the Fire Commissioner and regulatory agencies involved in industrial health and safety and fire-related issues. This committee would advise the training agency on current and future industry-related training and education issues in Saskatchewan.
2. a professional development program be developed leading to a professional designation for fire/rescue services supervisors.
3. using SIAST as the coordinating agency, a partnership of education and training providers be created to provide a single-window access for dealing with all matters related to education and training for industrial firefighters in Saskatchewan. It is further recommended that an industry advisory board or board of directors be established to ensure that the agency offers relevant, quality, and responsive programs. The agency must be mandated to work with appropriate authorities and agencies to standardize training for the sub-sector, and to establish credentials that are recognized and portable across the entire sector.
4. the Occupational Health and Safety Regulations term competent as it relates to fire instructor qualifications be defined by developing an industry-based train-the-trainer program that reflects the requirements of instructing in industrial settings.

Outcomes of Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management (SERM) and First Nations Working Group

The SERM and First Nations working group had representatives from SERM, post-secondary institutions, First Nations organizations and fire departments, the local municipal fire department and an industry with interests in forest protection (Appendix B). Given its historical linkages with SERM and First Nations provider agencies, SIAST's Woodlands campus was also included in this working group. As reported in Part I, discussions on this sub-sector were held with representatives of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC), and INAC documentation on its role in the provision of First Nations fire services was reviewed. A meeting was also held with the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN), Office of the Chief, to discuss the study and FSIN's interests in First Nations fire service. Due to the varied interests of the participant organizations involved in this working group, the format of this section differs slightly from the previous two sub-sections.

Investment in Fire Protection Equipment and Training

The overall investment in forest and First Nations fire services runs into many millions of dollars annually. A major investor is SERM as the department owns, rents, and maintains a variety of aircraft, heavy equipment, motor vehicles, and a wide range of firefighting equipment. SERM also operates and staffs fire-related administrative, operational and training facilities throughout Saskatchewan.

SERM's 10-year average investment covering the 1989-1998 period was $47.98m annually, in 1998 dollars. 1995 was a busy year for SERM as the number and severity of fires resulted in an expenditure of $89m in 1995 dollars, or $93 in terms of 1998 dollars. In addition to employing in the range of 800 people on an annual and seasonal basis, SERM's investment in emergency firefighter salaries is significant. For example, statistics for the 4-year period 1995-1998 shows that SERM employed 9850 firefighters over a 5-week period in 1995, at a cost of $12.59m. In 1996 there were 2577 firefighters at a cost $1.46m; 1997 saw 1671 firefighters at a cost of $.87m; and, 1998 had a high of 9451 firefighters at a cost of $10.54m. Each year's actual dollars are reported for the year spent. The 10-year average for fires during 1989-1998 was 756 fires per year in the provincial forest belt where outfitters operate, people live in communities, and the forest industry harvests wood.

Of interest to this study is SERM's investment in education and training, more particularly the most recent statistics. SERM's 1998 investment was $213,500.00 in the delivery of training, plus another $52,500.00 in development time and educational staff salaries. In addition, the department also spent $95,300.00 on public education programs related to fire safety and fire management, school materials, insect management information, and other public information programs.

As part of its commitment to human resource development within SERM, the department's Fire Management and Forest Protection Branch is currently involved in discussions with SIAST and Saskatchewan Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training with the aim of providing professional development programs to current employees. SERM's overarching aim is to upgrade and update the knowledge, skills and abilities of employees so they are qualified to compete for and be granted future promotions.

INAC's investment in fire services stands at $1.5m annually, and this amount largely represents the First Nations investment in the sector. As noted previously, $100,000.00 of INAC's total budget is provided for education and training through the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technology. Relative to resource availability, another significant investor is the Prince Albert Tribal Council in that it supports a fire prevention office and training unit, and it delivers both community and forest firefighter education and training.

Industrial forest harvesters (e.g. Weyerhaeuser Canada, Millar Western Pulp, SaskforMacMillan,

NORSASK) provide a support network to SERM in the event of fires on land that companies harvest under forest management licenses. Companies assist in providing fire plans, making people available for fire duty and firefighting, coordinating heavy equipment, and establishing camps for fire crews. Companies become directly involved if SERM requests assistance. In terms of direct investment, companies and contractors provide basic fire safety training to employees and install extinguishers and safety devices on machines that reduce the risk of fire starting or spreading. As required under various Acts covering forests and prairie lands, companies supply caches of fire hoses, backpacks, and tools for basic fire attack.

Entry-Level Prerequisites

The pre-requisites for entry to SERM's or First Nations fire services range from none to university graduation, depending on the position held. For SERM's regular pool of firefighters, the basic educational pre-requisite is Grade 10, with Grade 12 being promoted as value-added for applicants. An important consideration in setting educational prerequisites is the availability of high school graduates in northern Saskatchewan. SERM recruits firefighters largely through a regional- and community-based system, and will hire and train persons age 16 and over. Due to regulations for public institutions, SIAST and the regional colleges that contract training for SERM require trainees to be at least 18 years of age. SERM's preference is to get older firefighters who have the maturity and skills required for working in dangerous environments.

Like other municipal volunteer fire departments, entry to First Nations volunteer firefighters is open to anyone who wishes to join a department. Like their peers in municipal fire departments, the low number of First Nations fire departments and firefighters speak loudly about the problem of recruitment in that group.

Providers, Courses and Delivery of Education and Training

Following is an overview of current programs and services offered by SERM and First Nations providers.

Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management (SERM). SERM's participation in the working group was to share the Fire Management and Forest Protection Branch's experience with firefighting and the education and training of firefighters in Saskatchewan, more particularly in the northern region of the province. The Branch also shared its views on what should be done to enhance the delivery of education and training for both municipal and SERM firefighters because the linkage between both groups is of particular importance to SERM.

In SERM's firefighting role, approximately 90% of fires in northern Saskatchewan are wildland, not structural. Given this situation, the province's education and training programs require components that deal with wildland fires and the urban/wildland interface of firefighting. During the summer firefighting period, for example, it is not uncommon for a forest or grasslands fire to burn into a community's boundaries and SERM and the local fire departments have to interface in fighting the fire. In these instances, there is always a need for members of municipal fire departments to understand the basic principles of fighting forest and grassland fires, particularly in SERM's techniques, fire behaviour, and choice of protective clothing. It is not unusual, for example, to see a local fire department show up in full turnout gear in stifling hot temperatures and situations in which quick movement is required to avoid dangerous situations.

While the need arises for interfacing to deal with prairie fires and forest fires and communities in Saskatchewan, current institutional training programs do not include Wildlands or grassland fire fighting. SERM is willing to lend its expertise to the development of curriculum to cover this gap; however, the department does not have the capacity to provide training outside its own needs and mandate. What is needed is a delivery agency that would be mandated to spearhead the development and delivery of this training.

SERM identified a number of colleges and universities that it currently uses or sees as potential partners in a delivery framework for Saskatchewan. For example, due to the exemplary governmental-institutional structure for dealing with wildlands/urban interface within the State of Montana, it was recommended that any future delivery system look for exemplary Montana institutes as training partners. The British Columbia Institute of Technology and the Sir Sanford Fleming College in Ontario offer courses that could be useful as partnership courses for Saskatchewan. From the university community SERM noted Lakehead University, the University of Alberta, and the University

of British Columbia as providers of quality forestry programs. SERM currently uses the services of the Alberta Environmental Training Center in Hinton, Alberta, for the professional development of personnel.

An exemplary out-of-province public provider is British Columbia's Ministry of Forests, BC Forest Service Protection Program. The Ministry has a training branch that conducts training on the provincial, national and international levels. Courses are designed for both new forest firefighter recruits and target groups (e.g. heavy equipment operation, fire behaviour, helicopter use, helipad construction, rappelling from helicopters). The Ministry has been or is currently involved in training partnerships with Australia, South Africa, Korea, Italy, Malaysia and Argentina. The Ministry found it interesting that a Saskatchewan company who had a contract with a rail company recently asked for a course from the Forest Service, but the client was referred back to a provincial provider who met the Ministry's standards for instructors.

Here in Saskatchewan, SERM has a long-standing relationship with Northlands Regional College, Northwest Regional College, Cumberland Regional College, and SIAST. Using the SIAST/Regional College delivery network, SERM has found that the regional and community-based delivery approach has been effective in meeting departmental needs. SIAST, SERM and Saskatchewan Post-Secondary Educa initiative to have an ecosystem focus brought to SIAST's current forestry programs. In addition to the provincial system, SERM and the Prince Albert Grand Council have entered into an agreement where the PAGC will provide forest fire control training for First Nations firefighters. The Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technology (SIIT) is also interested in contracting with SERM for training First Nations firefighters.

Within its current mandate, SERM provides training in basic wildland firefighting techniques, primarily to residents of northern communities. SERM also offers training to volunteer firefighters who live in communities along the forest fringe and within the provincial forest. To date, some 300 members have been trained as a favour to local fire departments. As many of SERM's employees are also members of their local communities' fire departments, both SERM and the municipalities benefit from this investment. From SERM's perspective, there needs to be more twining of fire services training and closer liaison among all education and training initiatives offered by industry stakeholders. Following is a listing of SERM's s training provided to 1494 individuals in 1998:

• Advanced Fire Behaviour	16
• Basic Fire Fighting	1221
• Chainsaw Safety and Operation	13
• Crew Boss	64
• Effective Presentations	14
• Fire Cook	20
• Firefighter Supervision	59
• Heavy Equipment Management	22
• Initial Attach Crew Leader	18
• Sector Boss	47

The 1999 spring training plan for SERM includes the following courses:

- Advanced Aviation Management
- Fire Mapping
- Radio Dispatcher/Operator
- Forest Fire Investigator
- Prescribed Fire Planning
- Aerial Ignition

There are additional courses scheduled after the fire season.

To help SERM deal with the issues of interface and mutual aid agreements, the following needs were identified:

- There is a need for mutual aid agreements between SERM and fire departments so the agencies understand each other's role and capacity for firefighting in interface situations.
- Standard operating procedures (SOPs) are required for dealing with grassland and wildland fires as they relate to municipal fire departments, and education and training programs are required to support these SOPs and the interface agreements.
- Municipal governments need educational programming around their role in supporting fire departments and to be better informed about the community's linkages to SERM in the event of a fire having an urban and woodlands or grasslands interface.
- There is a need for Train-the-Trainer programs dealing with woodland/grassland and urban interface.

SERM would like to see these issue addressed through a provincial training strategy for the fire/rescue sector.

First Nations Provider Agencies.

Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN)

The FSIN is very aware of the need for fire safety educational programs and protection and suppression services in Saskatchewan's First Nations. While there is an accountability system in place for the funding First Nations receive from INAC for fire protection and suppression, few communities meet the compliance standards set by INAC. FSIN recognizes the need for community leadership in this area. The Saskatchewan First Nations Firefighters Association and the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technology also support this view.

Fire and safety fall under the housing portfolio of a vice-chief in the current FSIN administrative setup; however, the attention required for the construction and maintenance of housing leaves little time for addressing fire education, prevention, protection and suppression needs. To provide a focus on fire services participants identified a need for the FSIN to establish an office to oversee and guide the development of the fire/rescue sector in First Nations communities. The political mandate for fire and safety could remain with a vice-chief, but the day-to-day operational mandate requires focused attention from a person who is knowledgeable about all aspects of fire services.

The structure of this office could be based on the provincial model with a First Nations Fire Services Director at the FSIN level and Fire Prevention Officers (FPO) in each of the tribal councils. The Director's office would serve as the link to authorities outside the FSIN and serve as the internal link to tribal councils within the FSIN. The FPOs would then work within each council's communities to develop the required infrastructure, programs and services. This office could also serve a co-ordinating role in working with education and training authorities and with the new First Nations firefighters' association.

The SIIT has served a lead role for FSIN in the provision of education and training for the First Nations fire/rescue sector, and at least two tribal councils (Prince Albert Grand Council and Saskatoon Tribal Council) have become involved in the establishment of fire training agencies.

Prince Albert Grand Council

The Prince Albert Grand Council (PAGC) is the only Tribal Council in Saskatchewan to have a full-time, designated Fire Prevention Officer (FPO), and the Council has been very active in providing education and training programs to communities and fire departments that fall under its jurisdiction. The FPO represented the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations on the study's steering committee.

The PAGC has a forestry-training unit with qualified wildland fire instructors. As previously noted, this unit has been involved in the training of forest firefighters and it has entered into an agreement with SERM to forest fire control training for First Nations firefighters and crew bosses. This entrepreneurial thrust by PAGC is in keeping with its aim to establish a fire college the Prince Albert region. In a January 13, 1999, letter to industry, the PAGC outlined the Tribal Council's promotion of a Fire and Safety College it set up in partnership with the City of Prince Albert. The college has a smokehouse and training tower at the Prince Albert airport, and a parcel of land has been set aside at the airport that can be utilized for constructing the college physical plant. The college is proposed to have a dormitory and cafeteria service for 20 students.

A number of fire brigades from PAGC First Nations have won awards at provincial Aboriginal firefighter competitions (e.g. Muskoday) , and the Black Lake fire department placed 1st in Canada in last year's national competitions. Firefighters from the Saskatoon Tribal Council have also won provincial awards. While training of firefighters is important for the PAGC, the current primary need lies in public education for fire safety and in community fire protection responsibilities for chiefs and community leaders.

Saskatoon Tribal Council

The Saskatoon Tribal Council is involved in two major fire/rescue service initiatives. The council and MD Ambulance have partnered to establish the Emergency Services Training Institute in Martensvillle. Through the Whitecap First Nation, the council has also established a partnership with the City of Saskatoon Fire Department for assistance in setting up a fire department and for the education and training of Whitecap's firefighters.

Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technology (SIIT)

The Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technology (SIIT) has been the primary delivery agent for First Nations firefighter education and training in Saskatchewan, and it currently delivers courses on an on-request

basis to First Nations communities having fire departments. As noted previously in this report, the Institute currently receives an annual grant of $100,000.000 from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) to provide programs; however, this money is spent in a small number of communities. INAC records show that only 11 of 92 First Nations communities in Saskatchewan have an active fire department, and not all communities who have equipment have fire halls to store it. In many communities it is not uncommon to arrive and find the fire truck is not working or its firefighting equipment is inoperable.

As reported in Part I, SIIT delivered education and training records listed with INAC for April 1, 1998 – December 31, 1998, show that 168 First Nations firefighters participated in 21 training sessions offered in nine communities. The training focused on NFPA Level One and Level Two Firefighter and covered the following modules:

- Portable Extinguishers
- Ventilation
- Water Supply
- Forcible Entry
- Ropes
- Building Construction
- Fire Behaviour
- SCBA
- Wildland Fire
- Basic Fire Preparation
- Fire Behaviour
- SCBA
- Ventilation
- Ladders

A Basic Fire Recruiter program was also undertaken.

INAC sees a linkage between the lack of fire services in First Nations and the lack of education and training for the communities' leaders, residents, schools and firefighters. Given its current annual investment of $1.4m in capital infrastructure for fire protection, INAC would be pleased to see an agency that would work with the various stakeholders in advancing the education and training agenda in First Nations. INAC sees education and training as the linking pin for building stakeholders' consciousness about fire safety and in the provision of fire protection and suppression services at the community level. Linked to a lack of access to education and training, the overarching problem INAC sees in First Nations is forming and keeping volunteer brigades trained and re-trained.

INAC noted that it has an educational program available for First Nations community leaders, residents, educational authorities, and firefighters on their roles and responsibilities in fire services. Without the resources to ensure that the program is made available at each council or community level, the status quo prevails.

Saskatchewan First Nations Firefighters Association (SFNFFA)

To help promote awareness of fire protection and the need for fire brigades, equipment and training, a Saskatchewan First Nations Firefighters Association (SFNFFA) was formed in the winter of 1999 with representation from 7 tribal councils and 5 independent First Nations. The Association aims to represent First Nations firefighters and their interests and have an office in every tribal council area. The association also aims to build an organizational structure that would hire fire inspectors, have a fire school, train firefighters for First Nations, and lobby FSIN to assign a fire education and protection portfolio to a senior representative within the organization. Another aim is to have qualified persons to lead the development of fire/rescue services on First Nations and to work with education and training agencies for the delivery of programs and services at the community level. From the perspective of the SFNFFA, the establishment and maintenance of First Nations fire departments requires full-time fire chiefs within each band, or within each Tribal Council as a minimum. Currently, there is a need for regular training to be provided in First Nations communities, as training is more important than certification at this point in the development process.

The SFNFFA would like to see the development of a province-side strategy for establishing and maintaining fire departments and delivering education and training to First Nations firefighters and their communities. Like other municipal volunteer firefighters, First Nations firefighters would like to see a certification program established that meets their needs. The expectation that all firefighters in all departments in the province require the same level of skills and training in the wide range of fire protection and suppression techniques and technology is

problematic. For example, not all departments have the technology found in city fire departments, nor do they need it; yet, training on the technology is required for certification. A modular approach to training and a flexible delivery system is needed.

First Nations fire departments and firefighters are not formally recognized by the provincial Office of the Fire Commissioner as they fall under the jurisdiction of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. This issue needs to be addressed so that Saskatchewan's First Nations firefighters and their departments are brought into the provincial education, training and certification network. The fire departments need provincial status in order to recover the costs associated with responding to emergency calls that link to provincial jurisdictional matters. For example, a First Nations fire department that responds to motor vehicle accident cannot get reimbursed by Saskatchewan Government Insurance (SGI). Other municipal fire departments in Saskatchewan who respond to vehicle related incidents are eligible for some cost recovery under a formula with SGI.

Fire departments

The current First Nations fire/rescue system lacks structure from the provincial to band council levels. Some communities have no protection equipment or departments while others are leading the way in the provision of services. The Muskoday fire department, for example, was offered as a model department for First Nations to consider. The department started in 1984 and it currently has 22 members and a good array of equipment. Turnover is not a problem and the SIIT provides training on a regular basis. The Whitecap First Nations fire department was also noted as a progressive organization in the provision of education and training for members. The SNFFA estimated that, in addition to Muskoday and Whitecap, there are 10 active fire departments south of Prince Albert, but it is not known exactly how many departments are active throughout Saskatchewan. There are Level I and Level II certified firefighters in some departments, but the number is low.

In addition to training provided by SIIT and PAGC, First Nations firefighters in the Meadow Lake Tribal Council (MLTC) communities get training as forest firefighters for SERM. Despite this training, and the presence of firefighters in the communities, the communities fire services are not well organized and little to no protection services are available. The situation is similar in independent First Nations. For example, study participants noted that the Onion Lake First Nation fire department requires considerable training and development for it to be deemed compliant.

Like the MLTC, many members of the PAGC get training through SERM. The difference between the two councils, however, is that PAGC also provides training and support to its community fire departments through the Fire Prevention Officer. It was recommended that closer linkages be created among SERM, the tribal councils and delivery and regulatory agencies with the view of ensuring that firefighters receive formal recognition for the training offered by both agencies.

First Nations Fire Instructors

First Nations fire instructors have traditionally received their training at the Brandon or Vermilion fire colleges; however, the number of instructors is very limited. Past practice has been to use the resources available though the office of the provincial Fire Commissioner and SIIT contracts with a First Nations fire chief and a non-Aboriginal instructor for most of its training. A problem noted with this instructor program was that the duration of training dropped from 40 hours to 20 hours, so trainers exited lacking adequate instructional techniques and preparation skills to be competent trainers. First Nations firefighters would like to see more Train-the-Trainer programs available in Saskatchewan, especially with First Nations organizations playing a key role in the development and delivery process. Given the developmental and fire safety needs in First Nations communities, the future of fire-related education and training is seen as very important to Saskatchewan's First Nations.

Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology

Given its linkages with SERM and the PAGC, SIAST's Woodlands campus reported that it sees itself as a facilitating agency in the delivery of fire education and training for some First Nations needs. SIAST developed its fire services programs to meet a demand in the local area after the OFC began its withdrawal from training. The OFC's program had been well received by the sector and local fire services stakeholders approached SIAST to fill the void. Toward its end, the OFC program had been shortened to the point where it was not meeting the

needs of instructors. Participants noted that the instructional demands involved in the design and delivery of programs was becoming increasingly complex and demanding, and instructors needed access to longer and more comprehensive training so they could feel competent in their roles.

The Woodlands campus has also been involved in an ongoing initiative with the Prince Albert Grand Council and the Prince Albert Fire Department to establish a fire college in the area. The group currently has a training tower and facilities located at the Prince Albert airport. Weyerhaeuser Canada has expressed its interest in using the college's services and letters have gone out to other large employers to ascertain their level of interest. While the project has been delayed for a number of reasons, the initial training facility operates on a request-for services basis. At the time of this study, the fire college partners were involved in a promotional campaign of the college's services and revisiting plans for future development.

Educational Requirements

Education was the priority for First Nations firefighters and, given the scope of the need, it is seen as a starting point for many communities; and the FSIN, PAGC and SERM agree. The need for public education was raised as an issue for northern communities and some current initiatives were noted. Saskatchewan Emergency Planning, for example, has an educational service on evacuation available to communities.

Another identified need for public education lies in the planning of communities and fire protection because, as communities grow and new industries and mine sites open, fire safety and awareness will become increasingly important. To foster the development of safer communities, northern residents must understand how community and industrial planning fits into fire protection, and they must have better access to fire prevention and education programs for schools and homes. SFNFFA noted that there are only 2 federal fire inspectors for the whole province and, while these inspectors are responsible for all First Nations communities in Saskatchewan, they primarily inspect only federal public buildings.

Future Direction for Sector Development

Training agency. As occurred in other working group sessions, there was a lengthy discussion on the need for an agency in Saskatchewan dedicated to fire/rescue sector training. Participants expressed a view that the province requires an agency that is at-arms-length from the OFC to guide the establishment and revision of standards, to develop curriculum, to coordinate the delivery of training, and to work with regulatory agencies for purposes of granting accreditation and certification across the sector. Given that it has a provincial mandate for the delivery of trade and technical programs and is networked into regional delivery networks, it was suggested that SIAST serve as a starting point in the development of such an agency.

This agency would work with industry to identify and coordinate the development and delivery of relevant programs, and monitor and provide certification for education and training within the sector. For firefighter education and training associated with forest, wild-land, and grassland fires, a Saskatchewan agency should establish formal links with SERM and recognized out-of-province training providers. The agency should also adhere to national standards such as those established by the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre.

A key future role for a training agency lies in the professional development and re-certification of individuals involved with the many facets of fire/rescue services. A central agency would also provide aspiring firefighters with standardized training linked to employment prospects in fire departments. For forest fire education and training, SERM recommended that any developments in Saskatchewan link into the national standards established by the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre in Winnipeg.

Office of the Fire Commissioner. In future, the Office of the Fire Commissioner (OFC) should be have a higher profile in the delivery of education and training programs, and it needs to work at re-establishing the level of credibility it had prior to the early 1990s reduction in training. The view was expressed that the OFC should be taking a lead role and be working more closely with industry in delineating the education and training requirements for sub-sector and sector-wide application. The OFC

should also be more involved in setting standards and designing certification programs that are transferable and portable across the sector.

An example given of the need for relationship-building with the OFC was an instance where participants in a SIAST course were told by a visiting representative of the OFC that they did not need to complete the course. The class was underway and participants were sitting in a classroom at the time. The outcome of this event was that nobody came back to the course and SIAST's attempts to become a training partner with industry suffered a setback. This kind of event could be avoided if a communications system had been in place and the regulatory and delivery partners were more connected.

By linking the Office of the Fire Commissioner and SERM to a fire-training agency, Saskatchewan would be able to provide access to forest firefighter level I and II certification programs, and develop a strategy for re-certification programs. Under the current system, people are certified and that certification is in place for an entire working career. Given the advances in today's technology, SERM recommended that the province set out requirements for the re-certification of firefighters to ensure that the knowledge, skills, and abilities of firefighters are updated on a regular basis; and a re-certification requirement would ensure this happens. In terms of future pre-requisites for entry to training programs, participants noted that the educational bar is rising for people who want to become involved in wildlands firefighting. The technology associated with the field calls for firefighters who have increasingly higher levels of literacy and numeracy.

Funding and sustainability of training. First Nations fire departments currently have access to at least $100.000.00 annually to spend on education and training. As the federal department responsible, INAC should be approached for additional project funding tied to establishing a central office linked to human resource development for fire services, and the level of support for education training should increase as new departments are established. As SERM is interested in contracting out some of its training, there is an opportunity for First Nations and other providers to become involved in that facet of fire/rescue service education and training. By linking with Canadian and American providers who offer specialized training to SERM and other organizations, the view is that a training agency should be well positioned to sustain itself.

Participants noted that sustainability also means gaining commitment from sector stakeholders. This process will require negotiation and cooperation from varied interests, especially from providers who have a market niche in the overall sector and regulators who may want to retain jurisdiction over certification and accreditation. Sustainability can also be tied into a requirement for re-certification of individuals involved in fire services and in the marketing of programs and services outside the province. The participants were also interested in the extent to which they contribute to the tax collected on fire insurance and other premiums related to sector services, and whether any money is available for education and training.

Fire departments: Development and maintenance. The working group predicted that it will be harder and harder for municipal fore departments to attract and keep volunteer firefighters. There are many calls for volunteer time in every community and without some form of recognition and compensation for time spent in training and fire protection activities, and without access to regular and quality training programs, people will not remain interested and involved. This situation will place extra pressure on municipal governments to support fire departments, so the province must plan for this development.

A major problem for fire departments is that, apart from the certification records maintained by the OFC, there is no sector-wide coordination of programs and services, and no transfer of credit so firefighters can move within the sector. It was suggested that a credit recognition system, similar to a Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) process, be considered. Under this system employers and departments would recognize the education and training completed by firefighters, regardless of the sub-sector in which it was received.

A primary problem with establishing standardization of training across fire departments is that, while core training is carried out in every department, standard operating procedures (SOPs) are different from one fire service to another. Strategic training is carried out in departments as the types and ages of structures differ from community to community, the types of local industries differ, and so on. Given this situation, people who move to a new fire department usually start at the bottom and complete that department's training agenda. To help overcome the issues of mobility and transfer credit, it was recommended that a core of training requirements be adopted for

admission to the fire service in general, and then people can be trained in the various specific SOPs at each department without having to start over.

IFSAC certification was identified as the preferred standard for First Nations fire department training. And future-training strategies for firefighters must include distance delivery technology, self-directed learning/self-study modules, and re-certification programs.

Recommendations:

To guide the development of Saskatchewan's First Nations fire services, the following specific recommendations were made with the intent that the focus of action would be to serve all First Nations in Saskatchewan. While the FSIN does not represent all First Nations in Saskatchewan, the organization can be a key player in working with INAC to provide leadership in promoting and developing fire services. It is recommended that:

1. through additional funding from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, the FSIN establish an office for promoting the development of fire services and programs in First Nations communities. It is further recommended that the office's structure be based on the provincial structure of the Office of the Fire Commissioner and have a Director of Fire Services and at least one Fire Prevention Officer (FPO) in each tribal council. The FPOs in turn would work on the establishment, training, operation and maintenance of fire departments within the council's communities.

2. linked to #1, the FSIN office should serve as linking pin between Indian and Northern Affairs Canada and the provincial Office the Fire Commissioner re: regulatory issues for First Nations fire services. It was further recommended that, because First Nations fire departments and firefighters fall under the jurisdiction of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, this office would link with the provincial Office of the Fire Commissioner to formally bring First Nations firefighters and departments into the provincial fire/rescue sector communications network.

3. using INAC's community education curriculum, the FSIN establish a process for developing and delivering an educational program for First Nations chiefs and councilors to inform them about the responsibility of band governments in the area of fire education and protection.

4. linked to #3, the FSIN should work with tribal councils to promote the development and delivery of public education for fire safety and prevention in First Nations communities and schools as a first step toward the development of fire departments and community programs and services in all First Nations.

5. in partnership with INAC, the FSIN and independent tribal councils establish a mechanism for providing assistance to community leaders in setting up fire departments, appointing fire chiefs and recruiting and training firefighters as a way to promote and sustain development.

6. because First Nations communities need basic equipment and training for volunteer firefighters, a common purchase policy be established so First Nations can maximize the expenditure of funding on the purchase of fire and rescue equipment such as trucks, breathing apparatus, extinguishers, and other equipment.

7. the Saskatchewan First Nations Firefighters Association (SNFFA) be granted recognition within the fire/rescue sector as the association representing the training and development interests of First Nations firefighters, and the SIIT continue its role as a provider agency for First Nations education and training. Because membership is free to promote participation of First Nations aspiring and current firefighters, FSIN or INAC should provide the Association with base funding to carry out its activities.

8. the Saskatchewan First Nations Firefighters Association work with the FSIN and its regulatory authorities to develop a firefighter certification program that is based on the needs of First Nations fire departments.

9. all First Nations providers of education and training programs be brought into a provincial partnership agency which would coordinate all aspects of education and training of firefighters including certification, re-certification and professional development all sector members in Saskatchewan.

10. INAC be approached to provide ongoing funding to assist with the development and delivery of a fire education and prevention program for First Nations communities.

To guide the future of human resource development for SERM, First Nations, and the fire/rescue sector as a whole, it is recommended that:

1. the OFC undertake an initiative focused on recruitment and training of volunteer firefighters, particularly in small rural and isolated communities. This activity is critical if municipal governments and band councils are going to provide quality fire protection services to communities, attract and hold onto firefighters, and maintain well-trained fire departments.

2. members of municipal governments and band councils be provided with access to educational programs so they better understand their role in supporting fire departments, and in providing support for and access to education and training programs for members.

3. a system of guidelines be created to cover the development and implementation of interface agreements between SERM and municipal fire departments. The development process will require agencies and agents responsible to discuss the interface issue so stakeholders understand their role in fire situations, and develop agreements and support programs to guide the operational process.

4. a central authority be established to provide leadership and coordinate the activities of training agencies in Saskatchewan and to create an inventory of available sites for training. Training programs must lead to certification and be portable across the sector.

5. linked to #4, a central record keeping system be established for tracking the training undertaken by firefighters and instructors from the various delivery agencies (e.g. SERM, SIIT, PAGC). Linked to this system, a framework based on SERM and First Nations requirements for firefighters is needed to certify, update and re-certify firefighters and instructors.

6. education and training programs offered in Saskatchewan include an interface component to ensure that firefighters are informed about issues and trained in techniques related to interfaces among prairie fires, forest fires, and communities. While SERM cannot be responsible for curriculum development, the department is willing to lend its expertise to the process.

7. for wildland/forest/grassland firefighter education and training, partnership agreements be established with recognized out-of-province training providers.

8. all training programs for forest firefighters adhere to national standards such as those established by the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre.

9. as a starting point, a fire safety educational program based on life in small and isolated communities be designed and delivered in northern and Aboriginal communities; particularly in First Nations communities.

10. A standardized and comprehensive Train-the-Trainer program be made available to fire instructors so they feel competent in meeting the increasingly complex demands of fire services training. The program's curriculum must deal with wildland/urban interface and associated issues.

11. given the advancing technology associated with the fire/rescue sector, an examination be undertaken to determine the implications of re-certification so firefighters' knowledge, skills and abilities remain current.

Sub-Sector Summary

As with the two other working groups, SERM and First Nations participants expressed the view that this study was timely. The fire/rescue sector is in need of coordination and there is a requirement for a central agency that can serve the needs of sector stakeholders, particularly in the area of education and training. A provider-partnership model was recommended for shaping the agency's structure and for providing the array of generic and specialized education and training programs and services required across the sector.

There is a pressing need to focus on the provision of education and training and on the development of organizational and community leadership for First Nations fire services. The FSIN should assume a leadership role for directing the development of First Nations fire services, and establish an office and structure dedicated to the development of educational

programs and services for all communities. The newly formed SFNFFA has received recognition from the FSIN, and the association should be supported as a representative body for First Nations firefighters. The Association has the potential to be an effective voice for firefighters and to become an advisory body to the FSIN on regulatory, training and fire department operational matters.

Provincially there is a need for the sector to focus on the issue of wildland/urban interfaces and the development of a set of guidelines to use for establishing and implementing these agreements. Central to the interface issue is a need for mutual orientations to each partner's fire service system so all involved understand the structure and firefighting capability and technology of each partner. There is also a need to look at the requirements for re-certification of those involved in the provision of fire/rescue services.

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

Saskatchewan's fire/rescue sector developed at a steady pace over the past century by using a community-based approach to training and development. For the first half-century, local communities established fire departments and looked after their own training needs on a demand basis. The Fires Prevention Act (1912) established the office and position of Fire Commissioner and the right for employees within the Office of Fire Commissioner (OFC) to investigate fires. This landmark piece of legislation led to the development of a fire sector based largely on municipal fire departments, and it brought regulatory and operational guidelines to its operations; including a mandate for education and training, and accreditation and certification.

In the second half-century the fire sector grew in relation to growth in all sectors of the economy and rescue operations emerged as transportation systems and urban centers grew; in fact, no sector developed without requiring the services of the fire/rescue sector. During this period, the responsibility for education and training shifted from communities to the provincial level via the Office of the Fire Commissioner, but delivery continued to be largely community-based. The creation of a Principal of Training office in 1985 was seen as the beginning of coordinated and quality education and training for the sector; however, this office was quickly lost due to provincial budget restraints. From that period on the OFC decreased its role in education and training of both firefighters and fire instructors. By 1999 the OFC had no mandate in education and training and the current perception is that the sector is in dire need of leadership in this area. Today, the OFC serves as a certifying body for the fire/rescue sector and as a linking pin between the sector and other regulatory, certifying and accrediting agencies. At the close of this study a review was completed of the Office of Fire Commissioner and its roles and responsibilities in the future OFC. The review's outcomes hold implications for the future development and delivery of education and training programs and services for Saskatchewan's Fire/Rescue Service Sector. A priority for the to-be-formed sector council, therefore, is to meet with the OFC to discuss the review and link the recommendations to a sector strategic framework for human resource development.

As we move into the 21st century, the question is: Will old approaches work in developing the fire/rescue sector and its human resources? Sector members think not! The withdrawal of the OFC from training left a void in leadership, coordination, and access to programs. The problem is felt mostly in the volunteer firefighter network where departments are having trouble recruiting and holding onto members. Without access to scheduled and coordinated training leading to certification, people don't have the motivation to stay involved and there are many other calls for their time in communities. As we move into the next century, then, we must ask how we can continue to provide quality fire safety and suppression services to the communities served, whether they be mine sites, farming communities, cities, First Nations, or remote communities in northern Saskatchewan.

In addition to day-to-day training, sector members need ongoing professional development so they are prepared for technological change in all sectors. Members of the fire/rescue sector must be informed about and trained to deal with all technology that presents risks to public safety, as well as their own. New chemicals, new construction materials, new building designs, new motor vehicle design and manufacturing materials, and other advances bring new calls for advanced fire suppression and

firefighting strategies. However the sector's future unfolds, one thing is certain; education and training will always been at the center of its development.

Saskatchewan's First Nations need to develop a system for establishing and maintaining fire services in communities, and education and training are seen as central to that issue. There is a need to establish and implement mutual aid agreements across the sector and, again, inter-agency education and training will serve to link these agreements. There is a need for a communications link to connect all stakeholder groups re: conjoint education and training opportunities, and the sector needs an advisory body to provide direction and leadership to a central agency in the design of programs and services so standards can be met and revised on an ongoing basis.

Participants said that this study is timely as the fire/rescue sector has grown to the point where it cannot afford to continue to operate on past practices. Litigation issues, the need for cost effective training, the need for members to have organized and regional access to certification, and the need for supervisory and officer development programs point to the establishment of a Saskatchewan-based training agency. Study participants want Saskatchewan to regain its leadership role in the provision of education and training to their sector, and the establishment of this agency would provide leadership, coordination, access, partnerships, and a rallying point for sector development into the 21st century.

The study team considered a number of options arising from the research in reaching conclusions on the future of human resource development for the fire/rescue sector. The team considered the fact that Saskatchewan is a partner in Lakeland College, a bi-provincial college headquartered in Lloydminster, Saskatchewan, and having a campus and the Alberta Fire School located in Vermilion, Alberta. Saskatchewan will contribute $884,611.00 to the college budget in this fiscal year. There are also historic linkages whereby, depending on their geographic location, firefighters migrated to either the Vermilion, Alberta, or Brandon, Manitoba, fire colleges for entry-level or ongoing training. In addition, following is an overview of in-province initiatives aimed at creating a Saskatchewan-based training institution.

The Prince Albert Grand Council (PAGC), the Prince Albert Fire Department and SIAST Woodlands campus have been pursuing is the establishment of a fire college in that region. The PAGC has also developed a linkage with SERM to train First Nations forest firefighters. The Saskatoon Tribal Council and MD Ambulance have established the Emergency Services Institute in Martensville to provide firefighter and other emergency and health-related programs and services. The newly-formed Saskatchewan First Nations Firefighters Association hopes to become a delivery agency for First Nations fire/rescue education and training programs. The Saskatchewan Safety Council and other private providers have carved a niche for themselves in the provision of specialized programs and services, and the Regina office of Trans Canada Pipelines Inc. had considered establishing a training agency to serve the safety training needs of Saskatchewan. Then there is the historical role of Saskatchewan's regional colleges in partnering with SIAST and composite and volunteer fire departments and provider agencies to deliver programs and services to rural Saskatchewan.

What these activities make clear is that there is no shortage of education and training available in Saskatchewan; however, what is missing is the co-ordination of delivery and tracking of training undertaken by sector members. Coupled with a lack of coordination are issues such as industry input, mobility, credit transfer, and across-sector recognition of training and certification. These same issues have been on the agenda of Canada's Council of Ministers of Education for the past decade to ensure barriers to labour mobility are reduced, and all Canadians have access to programs and services that enhance their ability to participate in the national labour market.

Just as it has pioneered innovative approaches to the delivery of other forms of adult education and training, the securing of funding through the Fire Prevention Act for administering the fire/rescue allowed the province to take a lead role in education and training for the sector's members. The community-based delivery approach has been a hallmark of Saskatchewan's foresight in providing access to training and maximizing the use of existing resources at the community level. Former Premier Allan Blakeney's (Glor, 1997) concept of colleges without walls, for example, has proven very futuristic. Provincial governments that built colleges with walls during the Blakeney era are either closing them or struggling to keep them operating in the face of ever-increasing operational and maintenance costs.

Given that reality, participants noted that they want to continue with community and regional delivery, but through a coordinated approach. They also want training programs leading to certification and recognition of all firefighters in Saskatchewan; programs that are based on fire departmental or industrial requirements, not the one-size-fits all that currently exists.

Following is a full listing of recommendations from the three sub-sector working groups, followed by a series of recommendations by the research team:

Career, Composite, Volunteer Fire/Rescue Services

It was recommended that:

1. the fire department jurisdictions have traditionally hired and trained recruits to their own entry levels, future recruitment practices for career and composite departments should focus only on candidates who have completed a pre-employment training program and are trained and certified to NFPA 1001 standards.

2. to build fire department standards to adequate levels for meeting future demands, all firefighters should be certified to a minimum of Level II Firefighter. It was further recommended that, should this requirement were implemented, a grandfathering approach be used to award certification to existing career and composite firefighters.

3. using existing NFPA standards as guidelines, an officer development program and professional designation be established for Saskatchewan. Given a current national initiative to establish a professional development program and designation for chiefs and deputy chiefs, the Saskatchewan initiative should focus on the development needs of line officers and aspiring officers.

4. to bring some order the current setup for education and training of firefighters, SIAST be designated to establish a fire college or similar central agency based on a partnership model to oversee the coordination, development, delivery, certification and accreditation of education and training for firefighters in Saskatchewan. It was further recommended that the agency provide for systematic and regionalized delivery of education and training programs and services, particularly through the use of distance delivery technology.

5. any education and training agency that might be established be overseen by an industry advisory board to ensure that programs and services remain current with industry needs.

6. in addition to the foregoing recommendations 5, 6, and 7, it was further recommended that the fire college or central agency be responsible for working with appropriate authorities and agencies to:

   - establish standards and training programs that reflect the level of service provided in volunteer versus career departments.
   - establish recognized credentials that are portable across the sector.
   - conduct annual reviews of standards and credentials through a standing sector-wide advisory committee.
   - diversify training into areas such as EMS, infectious diseases, critical incident stress management, liability, litigation, and career counselling.
   - offer training in interpersonal skills such as communications, teamwork and leadership.
   - ensure that training providers remain current with industry advancements in terms of knowledge, skills and abilities.

7. the development of a fire college be consistent with and tie into the Saskatchewan Training Strategy.

Industrial Fire/Rescue Services

It was recommended that:

1. the framework of modules outlined in the Certification section of the Industrial Fire/Rescue Services sub-section be adopted to form the basis of an Industrial Firefighter Certification Program leading to the certification of industrial firefighters in Saskatchewan. It was further recommended that moving the adoption process forward and maintaining future standards requires:

   a) setting up a system for circulating, promoting and gaining the adoption of the standards by employers and industry stakeholders. This step would require the participation of regulatory, certifying, and accrediting bodies, training providers, and industrial stakeholders.

   b) establishing a Saskatchewan-based agency that would coordinate and monitor the development and delivery of programs and services, and certify Industrial Firefighters. This agency would identify current in-province and out-of-province providers of education and training,

and establish a system of partnerships to utilize these providers and develop strategies for filling any gaps in the provincial education and training network.

c) establishing an industry advisory committee, including the Office of the Fire Commissioner and regulatory agencies involved in industrial health and safety and fire-related issues. This committee would advise the training agency on current and future industry-related training and education issues in Saskatchewan.

2. a professional development program leading to a professional designation be developed for fire/rescue services supervisors.

3. using SIAST as the coordinating agency, a partnership of education and training providers be created to provide a single-window access point for dealing with all matters related to education and training for industrial firefighters in Saskatchewan. It was further recommended that an industry advisory board be established to ensure that the agency offers relevant, quality, and responsive programs. The agency must be mandated to work with appropriate authorities and agencies to standardize training for the sub-sector, and to establish credentials that are recognized and portable across the entire sector.

4. the Occupational Health and Safety Regulations term competent as it relates to fire instructor qualifications be defined by developing an industry-based train-the-trainer program that reflects the training requirements for industrial settings.

SERM and First Nations

It was recommended that:

1. through additional funding from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, the FSIN establish an office for promoting the development of fire services and programs in First Nations communities. It is further recommended that the office's structure be based on the provincial structure of the Office of the Fire Commissioner and have a Director of Fire Services and at least one Fire Prevention Officer (FPO) in each tribal council. The FPOs in turn would work on the establishment, training, operation and maintenance of fire departments within the council's communities.

2. linked to #1, the FSIN office should serve as linking pin between Indian and Northern Affairs Canada and the provincial Office the Fire Commissioner re: regulatory issues for First Nations fire services. It was further recommended that, because First Nations fire departments and firefighters fall under the jurisdiction of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, this office would link with the provincial Office of the Fire Commissioner to formally bring First Nations firefighters and departments into the provincial fire/rescue sector communications network.

3. using INAC's community education curriculum, the FSIN establish a process for developing and delivering an educational program for First Nations chiefs and councilors to inform them about the responsibility of band governments in the area of fire education and protection.

4. linked to #3, the FSIN should work with tribal councils to promote the development and delivery of public education for fire safety and prevention in First Nations communities and schools as a first step toward the development of fire departments and community programs and services in all First Nations.

5. in partnership with INAC, the FSIN and independent tribal councils establish a mechanism for providing assistance to community leaders in setting up fire departments, appointing fire chiefs and recruiting and training firefighters as a way to promote and sustain development.

6. because First Nations communities need basic equipment and training for volunteer firefighters, a common purchase policy be established so First Nations can maximize the expenditure of funding on the purchase of fire and rescue equipment (i.e. trucks, breathing apparatus, extinguishers, and other equipment).

7. the Saskatchewan First Nations Firefighters Association (SNFFA) be granted recognition within the fire/rescue sector as the associati interests of First Nations firefighters, and the SIIT continue its role as a provider agency for First Nations education and training. Because membership is free to promote participation of First Nations aspiring and current firefighters, FSIN or INAC should provide the Association with base funding to carry out its activities.

8. the Saskatchewan First Nations Firefighters Association work with the FSIN and its regulatory authorities to develop a firefighter certification

program that is based on the needs of First Nations fire departments.

9. all First Nations providers of education and training programs be brought into a provincial partnership agency which would coordinate all aspects of education and training of firefighters including certification, re-certification and professional development all sector members in Saskatchewan.

10. INAC be approached to provide ongoing funding to assist with the development and delivery of a fire education and prevention program for First Nations communities.

To guide future human resource development initiatives for SERM, First Nations, and the fire/rescue sector as a whole, it is recommended that:

1. the OFC undertake an initiative focused on recruitment and training of volunteer firefighters, particularly in small rural and isolated communities. This activity is critical if municipal governments and band councils are going to provide quality fire protection services to communities, attract and hold onto firefighters, and maintain well-trained fire departments.

2. members of municipal governments and band councils be provided with access to educational programs so they better understand their role in supporting fire departments, and in providing support for and access to education and training programs for members.

3. a system of guidelines be created to cover the development and implementation of interface agreements between SERM and municipal fire departments. The development process will require agencies and agents responsible to discuss the interface issue so stakeholders understand their role in fire situations, and develop agreements and support programs to guide the operational process.

4. a central authority be established to provide leadership and coordinate the activities of training agencies in Saskatchewan and to create an inventory of available sites for training. Training programs must lead to certification and be portable across the sector.

5. linked to #4, a central record keeping system be established for tracking the training undertaken by firefighters and instructors from the various delivery agencies (e.g. SERM, SIIT, PAGC). Linked to this system, a framework based on SERM and First Nations requirements for firefighters is needed to certify, update and re-certify firefighters and instructors.

6. education and training programs offered in Saskatchewan include an interface component to ensure that firefighters are informed about issues and trained in techniques related to interfaces among prairie fires, forest fires, and communities. While SERM cannot be responsible for curriculum development, the department is willing to lend its expertise to the process.

7. for wildlands/forest/grasslands firefighter education and training, partnership agreements be established with recognized out-of-province training providers.

8. all training programs for forest firefighters adhere to national standards such as those established by the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre.

9. as a starting point, a fire safety educational program based on life in small and isolated communities be designed and delivered in northern and Aboriginal communities; particularly in First Nations communities.

10. a standardized and comprehensive Train-the-Trainer program be made available to fire instructors so they feel competent in meeting the increasingly complex demands of fire services training. The program's curriculum must deal with wildlands/urban interface and associated issues.

11. given the advancing technology associated with the fire/rescue sector, an examination be undertaken to determine the implications of re-certification so firefighters' knowledge, skills and abilities remain current.

Researchers' Recommendations

From among the research outcomes and recommendations of the three sub-sector working groups, the research team makes the following recommendations to Saskatchewan Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training and Saskatchewan Municipal Government's Office of the Fire Commissioner. These recommendations are seen as priorities in establishing a Fire/Rescue Service Sector framework and for moving the recommendations forward. The recommendations are also intended to encourage Saskatchewan to re-capture the leadership role it held in providing direction in education and training for the province's education and training sector.

The study team offers the following strategies to move this report's findings and recommendations forward and to guide the development and implementation of the sector's expressed aim of creating a Saskatchewan education and training agency to meet its members' needs:

1. The study's steering committee be mandated the task of establishing a Fire/Rescue Sector Council to lead the future development of this sector. The Council's executive membership must be representative and reflective of the sector and its stakeholders. It is further recommended that the Council identify funding sources to support it's establishment, membership drive and creation of an advisory body to the proposed Saskatchewan-based training agency.

2. A Saskatchewan-based education and training partnership agency be established to serve the needs of the province's fire/rescue sector. It is further recommended that the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology be designated as the agency's coordinating body for the purposes of identifying potential in- and out-of-province delivery and regulatory partners, and for convening initial meetings to establish partnership agreements. In addition, SIAST should be mandated to coordinate the long-term delivery of programs and services, maintain records of training activities across the sector, and work with accrediting and certifying agencies to ensure that programs meet sector requirements.

3. the auspices of the Fire/Rescue Sector Council, an industry advisory body be established to guide the development of the partnership agency and the framework of programs and services for the fire/rescue sector.

4. As the fire/rescue sector provides a range of services including fire suppression, vehicle extrication, hazardous materials handling, and more, SIAST be provided with an initial operating grant of $250,000.00 to provide a period of stability and an opportunity for SIAST to establish a sustainable agency in Saskatchewan. This operating grant be provided to SIAST from the levy on taxes collected under the various provincial Acts identified in this study as being tied to the public safety services provided by the fire/rescue sector. As the agency should be at or near self-sufficiency at the end of 5 years, any continuance of this funding beyond that period would be open to negotiation between the province and the agency's board of directors.

5. The study's steering committee, through its FSIN representative and the office of the Vice-Chief responsible for fire related issues, convene a meeting of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Saskatchewan Intergovernmental Affairs, the provincial Office of Fire Commissioner, and other agencies concerned to discuss the establishment of an FSIN central office for the purpose of providing leadership in the development of fire services and programs in First Nations communities. It is further recommended that the office structure be based on the provincial Office of the Fire Commissioner and have at a Director of Fire Services and least one Fire Prevention Officer (FPO) in each tribal council, including the independent councils. It is further recommended that INAC provide the FSIN with an annual operating grant to establish and maintain the central office, and that new additional INAC funding be provided for FPOs and tribal council activities related to the provision of First Nations fire services. The amount of this annual grant is to be negotiated between INAC and the FSIN.

6. Using NFPA standards as a basis for development, a working group be established to develop a professional development program for line officers in Saskatchewan's municipal fire departments. This program will lead to a professional designation to be determined by the working group.

7. A working group be established to develop a professional development program for supervisors in Saskatchewan's fire/rescue industrial departments. This program will lead to a professional designation to be determined by the working group.

8. A working group of industrial firefighters and representatives of regulatory agencies be established to negotiate, promote and formalize the acceptance and implementation of the proposed framework of training modules leading to certification of industrial firefighters in Saskatchewan.

9. One of the initial priorities to be assigned to the training agency will be to review the state of the province's volunteer fire services, especially the provision of community and regional access to education and training and the training framework required for certification of volunteer firefighters in Saskatchewan.

10. Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management be invited to work with the OFC and the new training agency to develop curriculum for dealing with urban/wildlands interface, and to develop a framework for establishing and implementing interface agreements throughout Saskatchewan.

11. When the federal transfer of airports to local operators in Saskatchewan has been completed and industry jurisdictional issues around airport fire services have been finalized, airport firefighters should be included in the future development framework of Saskatchewan's fire/rescue sector.

12. As a priority, it is recommended that the to-be-formed sector council meet with the OFC to discuss the just-completed review of the OFC with the aim of linking the recommendations to a strategic framework relative to human resource development issues within the sector.

Summary

This study has reviewed the past and current state of Saskatchewan's fire/rescue sector, and made recommendations on the future development of the sector and its human resources. Saskatchewan's 1985 establishment of a Principal of Training was an office that should have been retained to serve the province's fire/rescue sector. Without a central agency to rally round and provide input, the sector has been left largely to develop in isolated pockets; some far better than others.

Saskatchewan's Fire/Rescue Service Sector developed to meet the province's pattern of demographic and economic growth over the past century. As study participants noted, however, we cannot continue past practices if we are to ensure that the province's communities, forests, grasslands, highways, buildings, workplaces and residents have quality fire protection services. These services will only be as good as the human resources that provide them. Advancing technology, changing demands for cost-effective and efficient public and private training programs and services, and the need for access to certification and mobility of firefighters points to the need for coordinated delivery of education and training.

Should the recommendations of this report be accepted and implemented, Saskatchewan's fire/rescue sector will be on track to lead the development of its human resources into the next century. The development process can begin by utilizing a portion of the taxes being collected through the various provincial Acts that collect a levy on insurance premiums related to services provided by the Fire/Rescue Service Sector (i.e. the Fire Prevention Act, The Insurance Premiums Act, and The Motor Vehicle Insurance Premiums Act). The collective revenue generated by these three Acts in 1997/98 amounted to $38,776.962.00. It is envisaged that the Saskatchewan public and its firefighters would be pleased to see a portion of that amount--$250,00.00--set aside for the purpose of ensuring that the competence of its fire/rescue sector members, and thereby public safety, is ensured. Through this investment, Saskatchewan can continue to build on former Premier Blakeney's concept of colleges-without-walls and place Saskatchewan, once again, at the forefront in leading the development of its most valuable sectoral asset, its human resources.

Next Steps

The recently completed review of the Office of Fire Commissioner and its roles and responsibilities in the future OFC hold implications for the future development and delivery of education and training programs and services for Saskatchewan's Fire/Rescue Service Sector. As a priority, the to-be-formed sector council should meet as early as possible with the OFC to discuss the review with the aim of linking the

recommendations to a strategic framework relative to human resource development issues within the sector.

In addition to this step, the study team recommends the following immediate steps be taken to begin the development of a strategic framework for moving this initiative forward:

1. The study's steering committee form an industry working comprised of an interim chairperson and four additional members to plan strategies for and begin the formation of a Fire/Rescue Sector Council. The working group should be formed from the three sub-sectors and have representatives from management, labour, government, and Aboriginal stakeholder organizations. This committee will require short-term funding to cover meeting expenses and to hire administrative/clerical assistance related to gaining industry support and forming the Sector Council. Funding will also be required to assist the Council in establishing an advisory body to the proposed fire/rescue training agency.

2. The working group convene a meeting with Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology senior officials, Saskatchewan Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training representatives, and the provincial Office of the Fire Commissioner, to begin discussions on the formation of an education and training agency for the fire-rescue sector.

3. The study steering committee, through its FSIN representative and the office of the Vice-Chief responsible for fire services, convene a meeting of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Saskatchewan Intergovernmental Affairs, the provincial Office of Fire Commissioner, and other agencies concerned, to begin discussions on the establishment of an FSIN central office responsible for providing leadership in the development of fire/rescue services and programs in Saskatchewan's First Nations communities.

4. The University of Regina's University Extension and Faculty of Administration and the Brandon Emergency Services College be invited to work with industry stakeholders concerned on the development and delivery of professional designation programs for fire department officers and industrial fire/rescue service supervisors.

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Appendix A: Steering Committee

Kevin Bates, SaskFerco (Belle Plaine)

Duncan Campbell, Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management (Prince Albert)

Ron Carlson, Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada (Regina)

Gladys Hill, Job Start-Future Skills, Saskatchewan Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training (Regina) and ex-officio member of all working groups

Gerry Huget, Saskatchewan Professional Firefighters Association (Regina)

Richard Kent, Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations and Prince Albert Grand Council (Prince Albert)

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Appendix B: Sub-sector Working Groups

Municipal, Urban & Volunteer Fire/Rescue Services:

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Brian Biden, Indian Head Fire Department

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Rob Donley, Saskatchewan Professional Firefighters Association (Moose Jaw)

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